S. HRG. 100-29

HOMELESSNESS IN AMERICA

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
HOUSING AND URBAN AFFAIRS

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON
BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS
UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDREDTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

ON

THE EMERGENCY NEEDS FOR THOUSANDS OF HOMELESS AMERICANS AND PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO HELP FIND EMPLOYMENT, PERMANENT HOUSING, EDUCATION, MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH CARE, AND OTHER SERVICES

JANUARY 29, 1987

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HOMELESSNESS IN AMERICA

THURSDAY, JANUARY 29, 1987

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND URBAN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met at 10 a.m., in room SD-538, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Senator Alan Cranston (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Present: Senators Cranston, Riegle, Sarbanes, Dodd, Dixon, Sasser, Heinz, D'Amato, Hecht, and Chafee.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR CRANSTON

Senator CRANSTON. The hearing will please come to order.

Today's hearing will consider a problem of growing concern to most Americans: the fact that many thousands of our fellow citizens have had to live in the streets without adequate food and without shelter.

The U.S. Conference of Mayors finds that, in city after city across the country, the problem has grown markedly worse in the last year. They estimate that, "24 percent of the demand for emergency shelter goes unmet".

Although every dimension of the problem is disturbing, it is particularly alarming to discover that a rapidly growing number of homeless people are families with children and that many are the mentally ill who are not being given adequate services.

As chairman of the Veterans Affairs Committee, I am also deeply concerned by reports that veterans are a disproportionately large part of the homeless population, 40 percent according to American Legion estimates. I have heard reports that in Los Angeles it may be as high as 50 percent.

Several days ago I visited the shelter here in Washington that is operated by the Community for Creative Nonviolence. While I was there, Mitch Snyder told me that based on his observations in a large number of cities, more than half of the homeless are veterans.

The size and growth of this problem is a darkening shadow of shame across the streets of America. It is a problem we must understand so that as a nation we can do what we can to ease the suffering which is there for all to see.

I am grateful that we have an outstanding group of witnesses with us today to help us understand the dimensions of this problem. The agenda is full and I want to get quickly to the testimony. I want first, however, to make clear that today's hearing kicks off

an action agenda here in the Senate on the problem of homelessness.

In another half hour the Appropriations Committee will act on an urgent supplemental appropriations bill to provide an additional $50 million for the Emergency Food and Shelter Program to provide extra help that is needed now.

The full Senate is scheduled to act on that later today so that the measure can go quickly to the President's desk.

The Senate Banking Committee will bring a housing bill to the Senate floor early in this session. We have had no housing bill for the last 3 years. The committee intends to include assistance for the homeless in that bill or perhaps in a separate bill. Senator Dixon has taken the lead in drafting sound legislation. Other members of the committee are also working on this matter.

Committee action on the bill is scheduled for March 3, on the housing bill, and I will bring it to the Senate floor as soon as possible thereafter.

Senate leaders are meeting to assure that the problems of the homeless are addressed promptly and comprehensively. You will be hearing more of this within a few days.

As chairman of the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee, I am deeply committed to ensuring that America responds compassionately to the needs of those who defended our country's freedom. I plan to introduce legislation next week to alleviate the tragedy of homelessness among veterans. Among other things, this measure would require the VA, HUD, HHS, and DOD to determine the number and service periods of veterans who are homeless and what benefits these veterans are entitled to, and require the VA to increase its outreach efforts to homeless veterans to assure that they receive the health care, job counseling, and income maintenance support for which they are eligible.

I will also ask the VA to take new efforts, such as those developed at some VA facilities in my home State of California, to facilitate employees who wish to volunteer their time and energy to provide assistance to homeless veterans and provide for the VA under arrangements with veterans' organizations and other nonprofit private or public organizations to transfer hard-to-sell houses from the agencies' inventory of over 21,000 properties for repair and use primarily for homeless veterans and their families.

Much needs to be done. Much can be done. We must work on a bipartisan basis with cooperation between the Congress and the White House. I intend to do what I can to make sure that legislative action is responsible and will make a real difference for the people on America's streets and I will do what I can to make sure that promises made on this issue are kept.

It's a heart-rending experience to visit a shelter like the CCNV operated shelter I visited the other evening, to see the people there, as well as to see them sleeping on the streets, as I have seen in Washington, New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and elsewhere.

One thing that rather surprised me in visiting that shelter the other evening is that quite a few of the people living there are working people. They have jobs. They are earning an income, but they can't afford a home even under that circumstance.

We have a number of panels today. I would like to ask that each panelist summarize their statement in 5 minutes and there will be a light that goes on when your 5 minutes are up.

The first panel is now at the desk and I welcome each of you. I am pleased that we have three distinguished mayors who have done an outstanding job in addressing the problems of homelessness: Mayor Joseph Riley, Jr., of Charleston, SC; Mayor Raymond Flynn of Boston, MA; and Mayor Jerry Abramson of Louisville, KY. Mayor Maureen O'Connor of San Diego was to be with us today but she was unable to come at the last minute. Her statement will be included in the record.

Before going to the panel, I want to ask Senator Heinz if he has a statement.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR HEINZ

Senator HEINZ. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much.

I want to commend you for holding this hearing on the homeless. This is the first hearing held by this subcommittee that you now chair and I commend you for putting the spotlight on what is a growing problem.

Senator CRANSTON. Thank you very much.

Senator HEINZ. Let me also take this occasion to urge our colleagues to support the legislation that we will be taking up today and to move swiftly in the 100th Congress at the conclusion of the oversight hearings.

We will act and it is my view and I'm sure the view of many people in this room that homelessness is an increasingly tragic and serious problem for an increasing number of Americans.

If you happened to be walking the street of any major Northeastern city—I had occasion to walk around Washington, DC—the immediacy of the problem with people huddled under paper bags in sub-zero temperatures is all too apparent.

Homelessness is a deepening crisis. It's not getting any better. It's getting worse. And it calls for more invigorated and coordinated Federal response as well.

I might note, Mr. Chairman, that for several years we have been spending money to reduce homelessness and notwithstanding that increased Federal commitment, the problem is, as I mentioned, getting worse. We have an increasingly diverse homeless population. We see families. We see displaced workers. We see runaway youths. We see battered women. And in spite of the fact that we have close to four dozen Federal programs aimed at helping the poor and the helpless, the fact is that we aren't reaching most of these people with existing programs.

These aren't just people who somehow slipped through a hole in the safety net. These are people who crashed right through whatever net there may have been. They have really landed hard.

Later today we will be voting on an appropriation to provide increased funding for the Emergency Food and Shelter Program. It's legislation that I think indicates to this country that we in the Senate understand the national concern and it is time to do more to help homeless people.

But this is not a problem that is susceptible to merely emergency reactions and quick fixes. There has to be a look at the longer term problems and we need long-term solutions. To my mind, those include the need for transitional housing so that people, once they have gotten up off the floor, literally in some cases, have an opportunity to bridge into some of the things we all take for granted, like an address and some skills and some help. And we have to provide, therefore, very effective, perhaps nontraditional counseling and outreach so that both existing as well as new services are utilized by this very diverse population.

Of course, we need to find a home for the programs that aid the homeless. Right now we really don't have a home for the homeless programs at the Federal Government level. There's a certain irony in that, that the Federal Emergency Management Agency says:

> We don't want to help the homeless. We just want big natural disasters. People disasters are not our business.

I don't criticize FEMA for being geared to tornados and hurricanes, but we need a place that is geared to hunger and homelessness and helping all the time

Mr. Chairman, I might add, I am particularly interested in how we can expand or modify some of our existing programs, such as the section 8 certificate programs so that homeless people can benefit from it. The problem is not simply one of eligibility for programs. There are almost 1 million households in cities across the United States on waiting lists for public housing in addition to all the homeless people. So we've got to expand and rehabilitate our existing housing stock at a minimum if we are going to meet increased needs.

That's not to say that housing is the only solution. As Senator Cranston is well aware, this committee last year approved legislation to authorize the housing in community development programs, something that the mayors have expressed an interest in. I know Ray Flynn is very interested in it and he does a good job with it up there in Boston. That reauthorization which unhappily did not become law includes the expansion of the emergency food and shelter program which is administered by FEMA, the emergency shelter program under HUD, and a transitional demonstration program.

Those provisions were more modest than what has been proposed already in this 100th Congress and I am going to be very much interested in hearing from our several panels of witnesses on how we can build on last year's bill, what they think of the various proposals—the Foley bill and Dole-Domenici proposals—so that we can move ahead.

Mr. Chairman, again I commend you for your interest in this. I will, for my part, have to shuttle a little bit between here and the Finance Committee Subcommittee on Health, where we are conducting oversight hearings on our health programs generally. And so I will be in and out and for that I apologize both to you and our witnesses. Mr. Chairman, I thank you for your leadership on this issue.

Senator CRANSTON. Thank you very, very much.

Have you determined which of you will go first?

Mr. RILEY. I will, Mr. Chairman.
Senator CRANSTON. Mayor Riley.

STATEMENT OF JOSEPH RILEY, JR., MAYOR, CHARLESTON, SC; PRESIDENT, U.S. CONFERENCE OF MAYORS

Mr. RILEY. Thank you very much, Senator Cranston and Senator Heinz.

Last night in my city of Charleston, South Carolina, normally very warm, it was below freezing, as it was bitterly cold here in this semi-southern city of Washington, DC and most of our country. And yet last night and early this morning in my community and through our country more Americans since the Great Depression were without homes, were out on our streets in this bitterly cold weather. Notwithstanding the fact that the problem of homelessness was not mentioned in the State of the Union speech, it is a national problem in this country. It affects cities of all types, all sizes, and all regions.

We thank you, Mr. Chairman, for making this issue the first subject of the subcommittee's hearings this year. I might say at the outset I will submit my written report for the record if I may, and also this is the Conference of Mayors' report on the "Continued Growth of Hunger, Homelessness and Poverty in American Cities," and we would ask that it be incorporated in the record as well.

LESS THAN 50-PERCENT OF NEEDS ARE BEING MET

The Conference of Mayors has been tracking this issue since 1982. We started a series of studies that showed then that less than 50 percent of demand for homelessness shelter, for hunger needs, and poverty was being met in our country. This past year our study showed that in all but one of the cities that we studied, demand for shelter increased by 20 percent. The demand in the cities that we studied was unmet substantially. Only one-fourth of the demand was being met. Also 72 percent of the cities have to turn people away because of lack of resources. And 84 percent of the cities expect the demand to grow.

The most significant change in the cities that we studied, mine included, was the growing number of families with children that are showing up in the shelters in our cities. A 22-percent increase in most of the cities of families with children without homes.

The stereotype of a generation or just a decade ago of homelessness is no longer true. It isn't the tragic problem of just the alcoholic or drug user. It is the problem of poverty and lack of affordable housing that produces homelessness to a greater degree in our country since the Depression. The causes of this new phenomenon are many. Lack of affordable housing, unemployment, job training, and the like. But because of our seeing such a clear relationship between the shortage of housing and this problem, we focused on that particularly this year.

We found in the cities we interviewed an increase of 40 percent in the demand for housing assistance for low-income citizens. We found the average waiting list of 18 months in cities for publicly assisted housing. Less than one-third of the need for low-income housing is being served in the cities.

In my city, the shortage of affordable housing has increased. The lack, as Senator Heinz pointed out, of halfway houses for the mentally ill and for the alcohol and drug addict is a serious cause of the problem. We have had to close the waiting list for assisted housing in our city and in my small city 800 are now on the waiting list and the waiting list is closed. We estimate that only 35 percent of the eligible low-income citizens are receiving assisted housing.

Categorically, a nation cannot, as this one has done, reduce its resources for housing for low-income citizens and not throw people out on the streets. And that is what's happened. Mayor Flynn will talk in greater detail about the relationship between low-income housing and this problem.

Quickly, we would urge the passage, as you have already indicated, hopefully today of the supplemental FEMA money. We would ask that this committee introduce the Urgent Relief for the Homeless bill, a copy of a similar bill which is now pending before the House, as well as we give our support for the Homeless Persons Survival Act of 1987.

If I could briefly in closing, Senator, just mention one thing, in Charleston, we operate an overnight shelter by something called the Charleston Interfaith Crisis Ministry. I serve as chairman of the board and working with local ministers who created it. We have seen our population triple in the last 3 years. It is run by volunteers. Thirty-some religious organizations and including the city government staff the shelter every night with volunteers.

I serve my duty as a member of my church, St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church. Three weeks ago, I did my stint and I was there. These are real people. These are not, as I said, you would have stereotypically considered the homeless a few years ago. They are people with children. They are people looking for work. They are human beings.

I would like to read just one paragraph from this little newsletter we sent out for all who work on our shelter. This is the calendar which shows which organization mans it. This just goes to those who work.

It said:

> News of shelter guests. Lamuel Stokes is in the VA hospital recovering from a stroke. We are working to try to find him a nursing home. Many of you may have noticed him, an older white man with a fairy tale beard. Mr. Ronald Blankenship died in mid-January of cancer. He will be missed. Angel and Leo Bryce (she was the tiny woman so many of you were concerned about who returned to their home in New Jersey to receive medical care they so badly need). We have said goodby to others we have known at the shelter, some like Ronald, reached the end of their time. Others died needlessly.

The presence of growing homelessness in this the wealthiest Nation in the world is a national disgrace. Mr. Chairman, it is not just a local problem. It is a national problem. We need your help.

Thank you very much.

[The complete prepared statement of Joseph Riley, Jr. follows:]

Senator CRANSTON. Thank you very, very much. We're happy to have your testimony as president of the U.S. Conference of Mayors.

Before Mayor Flynn of Boston, who is chairman of the Task Force on Hunger and Homelessness speaks, Senator John Kerry of Massachusetts is here to make an introduction of the mayor.

STATEMENT OF JOHN KERRY, U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS

Senator KERRY. Mr. Chairman, thank you very, very much. First of all, let me say how pleased I am—and I know others are—that you're holding these hearings. They are long overdue and I think many of us are not surprised that you have taken the initiative to air this issue which is so important.

My good friend, the mayor of Boston, was elected in 1983 and I know that when he was both the State representative as well as on the city council he has long been concerned with this issue, but as mayor he's been able to have a direct impact on it and I think that his testimony before you today will evidence his personal concern.

He is known as a mayor who is willing to personally go out in the streets at night to make sure that people do have shelter. He has been concerned to make sure that the counts are accurate. He has undertaken an effort to try to guarantee new initiatives within the city. But most importantly I think, he has really been exceptional in helping our State to understand this problem and to focus public attention on the problem and I think it's because of that that he became chairman of the mayors' task force on the efforts.

So I think the committee will be hearing not just the testimony of someone who has momentary present concern about it, but someone who has worked on it for a long time who understands the problem and I'm delighted to introduce him to you and I'm glad that the committee has invited him to testify.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator CRANSTON. Thank you very much.

Senator KERRY. I regret that I cannot stay. We are in the middle of Aviation Subcommittee hearings and I apologize to all, but I know the testimony will be important.

Senator CRANSTON. Thank you very much.

Mayor Flynn, we are delighted to have you with us.

STATEMENT OF RAYMOND L. FLYNN, MAYOR, BOSTON, MA; CHAIRMAN, TASK FORCE ON HUNGER AND HOMELESSNESS

Mr. FLYNN. Thank you, Senator. I appreciate the introduction of our Senator from Massachusetts, Senator Kerry. You will make sure your watch is on Senator Kerry's time, not out of my time, Senator Cranston.

Let me start out by congratulating you and the committee, Senator Cranston, for addressing the issue of homelessness by the U.S. Senate—I may be wrong on this—but for the very first time in my memory in a significant and serious way. I think that is also the case, by the way, if I could be direct, by the U.S. Congress overall.

When I was invited almost minutes after Jim Wright was sworn in as Speaker to appear in his office to talk to the Speaker about the very important issue of the homelessness, it was very encourag-

ing for many of us who have been working on this issue, and see the devastation and havoc that homelessness is causing in American cities. It's really encouraging to see this type of new leadership emerging from both our House and our Senate and we congratulate and thank you.

I want to reiterate what Joe Riley said, however, that, if you can imagine the State of the Union address, the most important presentation of national priorities presented to the American public here the other night that we watched on television, and yet at the same time no mention of what, in my opinion, is the most important domestic issue in America today; and that is the issue of affordable housing and the issue of homelessness.

HOMELESSNESS AND HUNGER ARE ON THE INCREASE

We have seen, as the report of the U.S. Conference of Mayors indicates, across the board, this is no longer a matter of opinion. This is a clear documented survey of 25 major cities in America that clearly, without question, demonstrates that homelessness and hunger is in fact on the increase in rather dramatic ways.

But that really shouldn't come as a surprise to us, however. When you look at what has happened nationally in terms of housing subsidies, when you talk about the issue that you raised, Senator Cranston, in your office the other day and in your introductory remarks on the issue of deinstitutionalization of the homeless, and you deal with the issue of a growing new poor in our society, particularly as it was referenced in the area of women and children, and you add a fourth component, and that is the tax code which is going to have the most significant negative impact on new housing starts in this country than of any piece of legislation that I could recall in discouraging those new housing starts.

You're seeing four major reasons why there is in fact not light at the end of the tunnel in terms of legitimate concerns of millions of Americans in the area of affordable housing. Look at the numbers for one second. In the 1988 budget that is before you, there is a 51.5-percent reduction again in affordable housing. That's a $4.2 billion decrease. Added to that, a 75-percent reduction since 1981 which has gone from $33 billion in 1981 to under $10 billion today, for Federal housing assistance. It's been the largest cut of any domestic program in the history of the U.S. Congress in this one particular area, and I fully understand the needs of how serious the Congress is addressing the deficit of this country, but why entirely on the backs of the poor, and particularly in the area of housing?

We look at the issue that you raised, Senator Cranston, that further compounds the problem of deinstitutionalization. We had in this country 505,000 people who were institutionalized and who were mentally ill in 1960. In 1980, we have 138,000, a reduction of 350,000. We were given a program that probably was well-intentioned and very compassionate in terms of reducing the number of people in mental institutions, but we had no program. They never gave us a program as to where they in fact would go once they were released from these institutions.

I'll tell you where they go. They go to grates. They go to alleyways. They go to parks. They go to benches. They sleep in door-

ways. They sleep in shelters that the city provides and the churches. That's where these people in fact are going and you look at the change in regulations across the board and you find that there is a growing number of poor women and children going in the ranks, as you already indicated, of homeless individuals.

Mr. Chairman, I know my time is up. This is no longer a matter of doing a compassionate thing. We are all concerned about the defense of this country, but we also have to have a strong country to defend. We are the strongest, the wealthiest, the most caring country in the world, and yet there is a very serious dark side of this country in its policies. And if we don't take care of these vulnerable people in this day, then I think the problem is going to grow and grow and grow and we are going to sentence the moral fiber of this country to something that we are all going to live to regret.

So I hope that with your leadership, with the Senate's leadership, with Representatives Jim Wright, Tom Foley, and McKinney all working together, we can send a clear message to the American public that this Government is concerned about the needs of the disadvantaged and the poor and the homeless.

I thank you for the invitation to be here and look forward to working with you on behalf of the U.S. Conference of Mayors. Whatever information we can provide you, we will be happy to do that, to lobby, to go back to our cities, and to make sure that America's priorities are put on the right and honorable course.

[The complete prepared statement of Raymond L. Flynn follows:]

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STATEMENT BY

THE HONORABLE JOSEPH P. RILEY
MAYOR OF CHARLESTON, SC

PRESIDENT, UNITED STATES
CONFERENCE OF MAYORS

before the

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND URBAN AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING AND URBAN AFFAIRS
UNITED STATES SENATE

JANUARY 29, 1987

Senator Cranston, members of the Committee, I am Joseph P. Riley, Jr., Mayor of Charleston and President of the U.S. Conference of Mayors. Homelessness has become one of the most serious and tragic problems facing residents of our cities today. It is of great concern to mayors of cities of all sizes, from all regions. Responding to both the immediate needs and the root causes of homelessness has been a priority of the U.S. Conference of Mayors for several years now. We commend you, Senator Cranston, for calling this hearing so quickly, and for making homelessness the subject of the first hearing held by this Subcommittee in the 100th Congress.

In the Fall of 1982 the U.S. Conference of Mayors brought the shortage of emergency services -- food, shelter, medical care, income assistance, energy assistance -- to national attention through a 55-city survey. That survey showed that the demand for emergency services had increased in cities across the nation, and that on average only 43 percent of that demand was being met. Since that time the Conference has done numerous reports on hunger, homelessness and poverty in cities. These reports have documented the causes and magnitude of the problems, how cities are responding to them and what national responses are required. In every survey that we have done we have seen the the problems of hunger, homelessness and poverty in our cities continue to grow; we have seen the demand for emergency shelter and emergency food assistance increase from one year to the next, and, in too many

cities, we have seen local agencies unable to meet that demand and have to turn people away.

HOMELESSNESS AND THE HOUSING SHORTAGE IN CITIES

I would like to share with you now the findings of our latest survey, published just last month, The Continued Growth of Hunger, Homelessness and Poverty in America's Cities: 1986. I will concentrate primarily on those findings of particular interest to this Committee -- homelessness and the shortage of housing affordable by low income people. For the 25 cities we surveyed -- all cities whose mayors serve on our Task Force on Hunger and Homelessness -- we found that:

- The demand for emergency shelter increased during 1986 by an average of 20 percent, and it increased in all but one of the survey cities. In that one city -- Kansas City -- the demand for emergency shelter remained the same during 1986.
- Nearly one-fourth of the demand for emergency shelter went unmet during 1986. In 72 percent of the cities emergency shelters must turn away people in need because of lack of resources.
- Homelessness is expected to continue to increase in 84 percent of the survey cities during 1987.
- By far the most significant changes in the cities' homeless population has been in the number of families with children, with four out of five of the survey cities reporting that the number of homeless families with children seeking emergency shelter has grown -- by an average of 22 percent. In 72 percent of the cities, families comprise the largest group for whom emergency shelter and other needed services are particularly lacking.

- On average, the composition of the cities' homeless population is 56 percent single men, 28 percent families with children and 15 percent single women. An average of 29 percent of the homeless in the responding cities are chronically mentally ill, and nearly one in five are employed, in either full or part-time jobs.
- The causes of homelessness most frequently identified by the survey cities are:
  - the lack of housing affordable by low-income people;
  - unemployment and other employment-related problems;
  - mental illness and the lack of services needed by mentally ill persons;
  - the high incidence of poverty and other economic problems;
  - substance abuse and the lack of needed services;
  - problems with income maintenance programs;
  - domestic violence; and
  - population shifts.

Because there is such a clear relationship between homelessness and the shortage of housing affordable by low income families, we also collected information on conditions relating to assisted housing. In the 25 survey cities we found that:

- the demand for assisted housing by low-income households increased in all but three of the cities, by an average of 40 percent. In none of the cities did it decrease.
- The average wait for assisted housing is 18 months. Waiting lists for assisted housing have been closed in two-thirds of the cities. Less than one-third of the eligible low-income households are currently being served by assisted housing.
- Over the last five years the safe, decent and affordable housing stock available to low and moderate income households decreased in over half of the survey cities, increased in 29 percent and remained stable in 17 percent. None of the survey cities expect to be able to meet rental housing needs, given the decline in federally assisted housing programs.
- Lack of income and lack of affordable housing were the two primary, and often connected, reasons cited by city officials for the inability of homeless individuals and families to secure permanent housing.

HOMELESSNESS IN CHARLESTON

In my own city of Charleston we have seen increases in the demand for emergency shelter, especially among families with children. Although 85 percent of our homeless population consists of single men and 10 percent are single women, in the last few years we have seen more families with children among the homeless, more young couples and more women. In addition many of our shelter guests are younger. One-third are working (either full or

part-time). Forty percent of our homeless are chronically mentally ill, and 40 percent are substance abusers.

While the Charleston Interfaith Crisis Ministry's shelter, which is jointly sponsored by the City and the religious community, has expanded in an attempt to serve more of the homeless, shelters in Charleston are currently unable to meet all of the demand and must turn away people in need because of lack of resources. In addition, families with children present special needs which we are unable to meet, particularly for private space in family-oriented facilities.

We see the shortage of housing affordable by low income families and the lack of halfway houses for the mentally ill or substance abusers as the principal causes of homelessness in Charleston. With cutbacks continuing in social service programs, we expect that there will be a significant increase in the demand for emergency shelter in Charleston during 1987.

The demand for assisted housing by low income families has increased steadily in Charleston. One year ago we had to stop accepting applications for assisted housing because the waiting lists were so long; there are about 800 households currently on the waiting lists and the average wait is now nine to 12 months. We estimate that we are now able to provide housing assistance to about 35 percent of the eligible low income households. Clearly without additional federal resources we will not be able to meet the housing needs of our low income residents.

A NATIONAL RESPONSE TO HOMELESSNESS

Homelessness is a national problem which demands a national response. We have made incredible efforts in our cities to assist the homeless, to provide them shelter and needed services. But with all of the volunteer time contributed, all of the local monies donated, we simply cannot meet the need either on a short-term or a long-term basis. Homelessness in the result of national problems -- principally the shortage of housing affordable by low income households; unemployment, poverty and other poor economic conditions; and the lack of housing and services for the chronically mentally ill and for substance abusers.

We need help from our national government if we are to meet the immediate needs of the homeless for shelter, for food, or for medical care. Responding to the root causes of homelessness will take a concerted national effort. We cannot solve this nation's problems of poverty and unemployment in our individual cities, and we cannot eliminate the housing shortage without a national policy and program which responds to what is a serious national problem.

This Committee has a key role to play in developing this nation's response to homelessness as you consider legislation relating to homelessness and housing and community development during the 100th Congress.

We urge you to introduce and to adopt as quickly as possible the Urgent Relief for the Homeless bill now under consideration in the House. That bill would meet some of the short-term and long-term needs of the homeless, by increasing funds for emergency shelter, for housing assistance, for health care and for

supportive services, such as child care. We feel that this bill meets a balance of short and long-term needs and provides enough money -- $500 million -- to make a difference in the ability of local agencies to meet the needs of the homeless.

While immediate passage of Urgent Relief for the Homeless is critical, comprehensive legislation, such as the Homeless Persons' Survival Act, which was introduced in the last session by Senators Albert Gore, Jr. and Daniel Patrick Moynihan, should be enacted as well. While there are a few provisions in that bill which concern us, generally it provides a comprehensive approach, using existing programs to address the problems of homelessness.

As the Committee considers legislation relating to federal housing and community development programs you will have an opportunity to attack one of the root causes of homelessness -- the shortage of housing affordable by low income families. In the last ten years there has been a 70 percent decrease in the number of additional households assisted each year. The decline in dollars spent each year is even greater. We urge you to reverse that trend and to establish a national housing policy which begins to meet the needs of low income households. Mayor Ray Flynn of Boston, who chairs our Task Force on Hunger and Homelessness will have more to say to you about federal housing assistance.

Senator Cranston, the United States Conference of Mayors appreciates the quick and strong leadership you have exerted on the problem of homelessness and looks forward to working with you on this and other national problems during the 100th Congress.

Senator CRANSTON. Thank you very much, Mayor Flynn, for your very effective testimony.

Now Mayor Jerry Abramson, of Louisville, KY, a member of the Task Force on Hunger and Homelessness. We welcome you.

STATEMENT OF JERRY ABRAMSON, MAYOR, LOUISVILLE, KY; MEMBER, TASK FORCE ON HUNGER AND HOMELESSNESS

Mr. ABRAMSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to submit my formal testimony for the record and then just talk a little bit about Louisville, KY and put it in perspective in the sense of our community.

Louisville is a city of about 300,000 people, serving a community of a little over 1 million and yet this perplexing issue is in fact perplexing because for many years the major cities of this country have had a dimension of homelessness—New York, Chicago, Los Angeles—and what we're here to tell you is that cities like Charleston and Louisville, cities like Cincinnati and Dayton, cities like San Diego in your own State, Mr. Chairman, are now seeing this situation arise in our own communities and it is a type of problem that pervades across this country.

TWO APPROACHES TO FOCUS ON

Now there are two approaches I would submit to you that this committee and all of us ought to be focusing on. How are we going to resolve the emergency crisis today, and what are we going to do about the causes that truly are the underpinnings for the problem?

Well, 15 years ago, we had no problem. Also, 15 years ago, in cities like Louisville and Charleston, we had no major homeless issue. And now we've had to create situations where the interfaith groups with Federal and local funding are supporting six mission facilities in Louisville to put a roof over people's heads and to provide one hot meal a day. We have put up community development block grant money in Louisville so that we can have a day shelter, and with private assistance from companies like General Electric putting a washer and dryer in there so that the homeless can wash their clothes, from the contractors who remodeled the old church in downtown Louisville where we have this day center doing the work for free other than the materials, we are open up 7 days a week, 9 hours a day, for this situation that, again, 15 years ago we didn't have.

The kind of things that Mayor Flynn spoke about in terms of families, is the fastest growing problem. Transitional housing and family housing, we used our community development block grant funds to expand our family units from 13 to 26 and yet now we're looking at a need for another 50 to 55 units that we are attempting to entice a private developer to be involved with and he's prepared if we're prepared with Federal and local money to assist him in doing that project.

That's one focus, to be sure the people aren't starving, to be sure that there are survival opportunities in our cities. But that's not the real end-all and be-all that's going to resolve this issue.

I would submit to you that you've got to look at the causes. When I meet with the social service agencies in Louisville, KY,

they talk about three major causes that have really created the homeless issue over the last 15 years.

They list No. 1 as the change in the economy from the manufacturing to the service industry. They look second to the decision by the Federal Government to wholesalely over the last 2 or 3 years turn out the mentally ill into our communities, as Mayor Flynn spoke about. And third, and the one I'd like to focus on, is the fact that there is no Federal housing policy in this country today, especially as it relates to low income families.

CUTS IN FUNDING

When you begin to realize that since 1981 we have literally cut the funding to housing in this country to the urban areas of this country by 70 percent—that is, 70 percent of the low-income housing funding has been cut since 1981. We've gone from $30 billion to $8 billion. When you look at our Nation's public housing stock that's in an advanced stage of decay and deterioration, the maintenance programs that are necessary have been cut—the maintenance programs for our public housing facilities.

And because of the decay and because of the deterioration, many of our housing units have literally been torn down and demolished. So we are looking at fewer housing units for the low income. We're looking at a situation with those that do still exist being in deplorable condition, and yet Louisville, KY has got 3,400 families on a waiting list to go into public housing.

I would submit to you that the record shows that the number of rental families making $10,000 or less has increased in the last 10 years by approximately 3 million people and yet the units that they can afford has decreased by 2 million people. So I think it's so important for this committee to be focused on creating a Federal housing policy that will take us into the 1990's because the policy we have today, in my judgment, exacerbates the situation rather than helps it.

The tax reform act of 1986 has literally taken five programs that I had on the desk in my office ready to go for low- and moderate-income families, to entice the private sector to get involved in helping us resolve this problem—it has taken those off the drawing boards because they simply cannot get the kind of tax opportunities that would diminish the risk sufficient for them to get involved in low-cost housing.

So, yes, emergency-wise, we are taking care of putting a roof over somebody's head and, yes, we need your help as relates to H.R. 558 to be sure that food and health care and job training all through FEMA and HHS and HUD are required, but when you look at the real nitty-gritty, when you look at the focus on the bottom line of how are we going to resolve this, I would submit to you that you've got to look at the causes. You've got to help us with a Federal policy in the housing area that will assist in not only returning some funds to the public housing situation and allowing maintenance money and programs such as those to go forward, but you can't look at things in a vacuum. As you review community development block grant moneys, you've got to remember we've already lost revenue sharing; we've lost health care funds; we've lost job

training funds; we've lost opportunities in the Tax Code for housing assistance.

So I would hope that you perceive the needs and you understand the true agenda, that you will look at it all in a giant picture and submit to us some support for the homeless in our communities.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The complete prepared statement of Jerry Abramson follows:]

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STATEMENT BY

THE HONORABLE RAYMOND L. FLYNN
MAYOR OF BOSTON

CHAIRMAN, TASK FORCE ON
HUNGER AND HOMELESSNESS
U.S. CONFERENCE OF MAYORS

Before The

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HOUSING
AND URBAN AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING AND URBAN AFFAIRS
UNITED STATES SENATE

JANUARY 29, 1987

Senator Cranston, members of the Committee, I want to thank you for your efforts of behalf of America's most vulnerable citizens, her homeless.

Mr. Chairman, as Mayor Riley just referenced, the Task Force that I chair for the U.S. Conference of Mayors recently released a survey of the problems of hunger and homelessness in 25 major cities. After hearing the State of the Union address on Tuesday night--with no mention of the homeless or of the need for national initiatives to help them--I began to wonder if the poor are still considered citizens of the Union by some in Washington. Because the results of this survey are a virtual bill of indictment of the neglect and indifference with which the national budget has treated the homeless. In virtually every city, mayors reported increases in the numbers of homeless families and individuals. The average increase in demand for emergency shelter was 20 percent.

Not surprisingly, 2/3 of the cities noted that the number of poor people also increased in 1986. The survey indicated clear trends toward dwindling supplies of affordable housing.

Also not surprisingly, Mr. Chairman, this overall trend took definite form during a five year period of unprecedented raids on the domestic treasury. Federal housing assistance has been cut by 75 percent during this time period, from $33 billion in 1981, to under $10 billion today.

Cities have been extending themselves to develop a compassionate response. In my state, mayors are trying to develop strategies to replace the failed policy of de-institutionalization, that nationally, has reduced the number of mentally ill in institutions from 505,000 in 1960 to 138,000 in 1980--a reduction of over 350,000.

Mr. Chairman, I would now like to briefly describe the extent of the homeless problem in Boston and then talk about some of the housing issues concerning the homeless as well as a three step program which will begin to turn around our present crisis.

Homelessness in Boston

In my city of Boston we saw a slight increase in the demand for emergency shelter during 1986. We have seen an increase in the numbers of families with children seeking shelter and, indeed, since 1983 the percentage of children among the homeless has increased from five to 13 percent. Families with children compose one-fifth of our homeless population. Single men account for 65 percent of our homeless population, single women for 14 percent. One-fourth of our homeless adults are working at either full or part-time jobs. Thirty-two percent are chronically mentally ill.

Despite the fact that there was a 17 percent increase in the number of shelter beds available in Boston during 1986, emergency shelters must turn away people in need because of lack of resources. Family shelters turn away up to 50 families per month, because of lack of rooms. Other shelters, however, have flexible admissions and allow people to stay even if they do not have beds.

Among the services we have established for the homeless are:

- Services van, which takes homeless people on the streets on cold nights to shelters and/or provides them with a blanket and coffee;
- health care, through a grant from the Robert Woods Johnson Foundation;
- housing counseling, by Veterans Services, the Elderly Commission and the Mayor's office;
- a night drop-in center, at Boston City Hospital with 60 cots and shower facilities.

We see the lack of affordable housing, mental illness and insufficient services for the mentally ill, and poverty as the primary causes of homelessness in Boston.

We expect that the demand for shelter will continue to increase somewhat this year, because Boston's growing population has greatly strained the housing market. The City, however, has encouraged affordable housing production and the creation of new shelter beds and transitional housing in an effort to at least keep pace with the continuing need.

The Housing Crisis in Boston

Last year we saw a 19 percent increase in the demand for assisted housing by low-income families in Boston. The average wait for assisted housing is up to 60 months, and the Boston Housing Authority has stopped accepting applications. We estimate that 70 percent of the eligible low-income households in Boston are currently being served by assisted housing. Since most low-

income families cannot afford non-assisted housing in Boston today, the 30 percent not being served are increasingly at risk.

In the last five years in Boston we have seen a 10 to 15 percent decline in the safe, decent and affordable housing stock available to low and moderate income families. The City has increased funding for all forms of low income housing, from shelters to new low income family housing. We have worked to implement inclusionary zoning programs to attract private funds. But, we are unable to keep up with rental housing needs, because of soaring housing costs, cutbacks in federal funds, and the need to devote resources to revitalizing the existing "at risk" units in Boston.

Homeless individuals and families are unable to secure permanent housing in Boston because of insufficient income, (in particular to meet the requirement of depositing both the first and last month's rent), the lack of affordable housing, and the unwillingness of private landlords to accept Section 8.

The Housing Crisis in America

Homelessness is the tragic end result of the fact that this nation does not have an adequate national housing policy. Possibly the most important domestic challenge that the 100th Congress faces is that of fulfilling its promise -- first made in 1949 -- of a "decent home" for every American.

The nation's housing situation has been a disaster in recent years. Since 1980 -- for the first time in the postwar period -- the rate of homeownership has declined. For young families, in particular, the "American dream" is increasingly beyond reach.

While the most serious consequence of this housing crisis is the growing epidemic of homelessness, in 1987, the housing shortage reaches deep into the middle-class as well.

As Mayors, we feel these cuts every day. We look at vacant buildings we want to rehabilitate. We look at empty lots where we'd like to see new construction. We look at skyrocketing homeownership costs that could be helped by weatherization programs. We look at long waiting lists for public and subsidized housing. And we look at the homeless in our streets, alleyways, and subways, and in our shelters, and see Americans who deserve decent, affordable, permanent housing.

A Federal Housing Policy

We obviously need a new direction for federal housing policy. The plight of the homeless should serve as a catalyst, reminding us that the true test of government is how it serves the most needy. But we must recognize that our real goal is not simply to serve the homeless, but to eliminate homelessness.

That will take, in my mind, a three-pronged approach.

The first, critical, step, is to provide emergency food, shelter, and health care for America's homeless. This is what the "Urgent Relief for the Homeless Act" will do. I urge you to pass this important legislation quickly.

In the same vein, I would urge you to consider bills filed by Senator Daniel Patrick Moynahan, Rep. Ted Weiss and by Rep. Charles Schumer, all of New York, that would help the homeless to get out of awful and wasteful "welfare hotels" and into more secure, decent housing. Right now, federal Emergency Assistance funds are paid to owners of run-down "welfare hotels" -- no place for homeless families with children -- often at exorbitant costs to the government. These bills would enable federal Emergency Assistance dollars to be used for permanent housing and to build and operate non-profit shelters for the homeless rather than subsidize welfare hotel operators.

We should also look at strategies to help us preserve existing lodging houses and Single-Room Occupancy (SRO) housing. One approach would be to revise the Section 202 housing program for the elderly and handicapped so that funds can be used to preserve, acquire and develop SROs.

The second stage of our housing policy requires a more comprehensive approach to serving the homeless and the near-homeless. The "Homeless Persons Survival Act," sponsored by Senators Albert Gore Jr. of Tennessee and Daniel Patrick Moynihan of New York, is such a comprehensive approach. It includes provisions for the expansion of low-income housing, health care, programs to serve the mentally ill homeless and for job training, day care, and educational opportunities for homeless families. While there are a few provisions in the bill which concern us, generally it provides a comprehensive approach using existing programs to address the problems of homelessness.

The third stage requires a major new approach to expand the supply of affordable housing. In a recent talk to a conference of housing providers, I proposed a National Housing Partnership Act. It would build on the recent growth of non-profit development groups in cities across the nation. The Act would provide seed money for the expansion of local partnerships between local government, business and foundations, and non-profit community-based housing groups. In addition we need to fund at an adequate level our basic housing assistance program, Section 8 certificates, so that we can increase the numbers of households provided assistance and the inventory of low- and moderate-income housing.

We cannot expect to solve the nation's housing crisis overnight. Our most immediate priority must be to serve those most in need and I look forward to working with you to pass the "Urgent Relief for the Homeless Act." Then, we must roll up our sleeves and continue the fight for affordable housing for all Americans. Senator Cranston, thank you for the opportunity to appear before the Subcommittee. We stand ready to work with you in developing an adequate national response to homelessness and to this nation's housing crisis.

Presentation to the U.S. Senate Sub-committee

on Housing and Urban Affairs

By Jerry E. Abramson

Mayor of Louisville, Kentucky

It is my honor and pleasure to be here today to discuss with my fellow mayors and this Senate sub-committee a rapidly growing problem that is one of the most perplexing issues faced by our nation today - the homeless.

The homeless issue is perplexing because there is no one single cause of the problem and, therefore, no one single solution.

It is perplexing because while this nation's largest cities have long experienced some degree of homelessness among their populations, never before have America's median-sized cities, like Louisville, Charleston and San Diego, been faced with such large numbers of homeless people.

There's also no doubt that the problem has grown much more severe in recent years in our largest cities, like Boston, New York, Chicago and Los Angeles.

I commend this sub-committee for recognizing the severity of the homeless problem, especially the growth of the problem throughout cities all across the United States, and for inviting us to be with you to discuss the issue so we might give you some guidance as you deliberate proposals to address the problem.

No one really knows just how many homeless people there are in this country. Estimates vary within a wide range. Even in my own city of Louisville, estimates of the number of homeless people vary widely.

Louisville recently made the cover of USA Today when that newspaper cited a survey of the homeless problem conducted by the U.S. Conference of Mayors. The survey of cities indicated that Louisville had the fastest growing homeless problem in the United States, with a 45% increase in the number of homeless families over the last year.

I think that increase can be attributed to the fact that the City of Louisville, through a special Homeless Task Force, conducted its first ever detailed survey of homeless people. The Task Force counted not only those seeking nightly shelter, but also those people who were forced to move in with other families in order to avoid literal homelessness.

Thus, Louisville's census of the 3,500 homeless people includes those actually without a roof over their heads as well as those who are doubling up with other families in cramped, three-room apartments.

As a result of the work of the Homeless Task Force, the City of Louisville, county government and the private sector have joined forces to address the immediate needs of the homeless.

Private social service agencies (that do receive some government funding) operate six shelters for the homeless, providing a place to sleep and a hot meal.

In early 1986 the city provided Community Development funds to double the capacity of the community's family shelter, increasing its occupancy from 13 to 26 families.

The city, county and the Homeless Task Force established in early 1986 the St. John's Day Center in an old church near downtown Louisville. The day center is open nine hours a day, seven days a week and provides laundry facilities, personal care items (soap, shampoo, etc.), counseling and basic health care services.

The City provided CDBG funds for renovation of the church, county government assigns one full time employee to provide counseling and the private sector contributes money and volunteers to provide the other services.

Our biggest unfulfilled need in Louisville is to provide more emergency and transitional housing for homeless families. We have on the drawing board plans to develop 56 more family units, again calling upon the resources of city government (using CDBG funds), county government and the private sector.

We've been fairly successful in meeting the most basic needs of the homeless - providing them with a roof, however cramped and temporary the accommodations may be, and providing them with at least one decent meal each day.

Obviously, in Louisville, and I suspect in most other cities, we are only treating the symptoms of the homeless problem. To address the causes of the problem, we need help.

Most mayors and social service agencies will likely agree that there are three primary causes for the significant increase in the numbers of homeless people over the last few years: the change in our nation's economy from manufacturing to service-oriented jobs, the deinstitutionalization of mentally ill patients and the failure of the federal government's housing policy to address a very significant need for low income housing.

Senator CRANSTON. Thank you very, very much, Mayor Abramson.

I have just a very few questions myself and then we'll go to other members of the panel here.

DEINSTITUTIONALIZATION OF THE MENTALLY ILL

First, let me ask you this. How much of the problem do you feel is caused by the deinstitutionalization of mentally ill without providing community services to compensate? How much is caused by simply an inadequate and declining supply of affordable housing, even for those with some income? And what other changes in Federal policy have been responsible, and what else? What do you think are the main causes?

Mr. FLYNN. Well, Senator, you raised two of the points that I made reference to. I will restate them again. The lack of affordable housing is the major issue, the contributing reason for the growing homelessness in America. That's what the survey indicates—dramatic cuts, as has already been indicated, since 1981 between 70 and 75 percent reduction in Federal subsidies for sections 8 and 202 and all these other different programs. So a dramatic cut in that area, and included in this budget as well, again there is a 51-percent reduction of the existing appropriation which is an additional $4.2 billion.

So that is going to further add to the problem of homelessness in America.

No. 2, the deinstitutionalization issue, Senator. You are absolutely right. Again, over half a million people confined in a mental institution and Government decided that it was not the most humane type of setting for them—and they were probably right in that respect, but they should have had an alternative program for them, a community-based program for them. Instead of that, the community-based program for them is the alleyways, the park benches, the grates, the doorways, and the shelters.

Senator CRANSTON. Thank you. Mayor Riley.

Mr. RILEY. Mr. Chairman, our survey shows that 29 percent of the homeless are chronically mentally ill. An interesting point that you referred to in your visit is the number in the shelters now that are working.

In Charleston, a third of our visitors, as we call them, in our shelter are working either full time or part time. They are the working poor who can't afford to find a home.

Senator CRANSTON. What percentage of the homeless are veterans?

Mr. FLYNN. It's my impression, Senator, that about—you made the point about half of the homeless in the shelters are veterans. That's about right. That's clearly about right, and about one-fourth of the people who are in shelters are working people. They're just not able to afford the exorbitantly high cost of housing and that's why they are in fact in shelters. So it's about one-half, Senator.

Mr. ABRAMSON. What we've run into, Senator, if I may, is an amazing number of transient folks looking for work. People have a perception that folks in the homeless category are staying in the day shelter during the day and the mission house at night are

simply sitting around with nothing to do and no interest in doing anything. When we go down to our day shelter and you meet coal miners from eastern Kentucky or farmers from western Kentucky or folks who have come through Cincinnati and Columbus and Indianapolis and are hearing that it might be better in Louisville for a job and they come in and they are looking and they are attempting to find work like that on their way to Nashville and on to Birmingham—you get a major portion of our people being those types of transients who are willing to work, looking for work.

Some have been in the construction business. About 20 percent of our folks seem to be construction workers who when they are working are working and when they're not are at our day shelters.

Senator CRANSTON. Do you have any suggestions as to the proper division of what the responsibilities are between the private sector on the one hand and the Federal, State, and local government on the other in dealing with this problem?

Mr. ABRAMSON. We've been able to handle that at our day shelter and I think it's been a tremendous example of a cooperative effort where we've been able to go to the private sector. We put together a task force for the homeless and that task force has been able to attract, as I said, assistance from General Electric to put washers and dryers in, contractors who have come in and done their remodeling for free, and then the Interfaith Council and the church groups, the volunteers support it, with the city paying for the remodeling and the country putting people in there to help in counseling.

So there are opportunities to put the private sector and the public sector together.

Senator CRANSTON. Could you give us your appraisal of the legislation that's been introduced in the House, H.R. 558, the Urgent Relief for the Homeless bill? What do you like about it and what do you feel could be improved?

Mr. RILEY. Well, we like all aspects of it, Mr. Chairman. The food and shelter $70 million through FEMA, of course hopefully part of which will be approved by the Senate this afternoon; the extra money for the section 8 certificates—the decline of section 8, the reduction of them being from vouchers to certificates 15 to 5 years, this has really chilled a lot of the low-income housing assistance opportunities in our cities.

It's a comprehensive approach that we think is a very sound one.

HEALTH CARE FOR HOMELESS PEOPLE

Mr. FLYNN. Senator, let me just add as well, there's a health care component in it as well that is very, very important. We were fortunate enough to get a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to provide health care for our homeless.

As you well know, many of these shelters are overcrowded. They are sleeping in fours in lobbies. So the high rate of tuberculosis among homeless people is in fact quite high. So we've been able to use that grant and some of our scarce city dollars to go out and do the testing and prevention and maintenance and so forth for homeless individuals. And that's another very strong component of that

piece of legislation, the health care component for the homeless who suffer from far greater health problems than any of us.

Senator CRANSTON. Thank you very much.

Senator Riegle.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR RIEGLE

Senator RIEGLE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Let me congratulate you for holding these hearings and doing so early in the session and I thank our witnesses at the table now and those that will follow.

I'm struck as I look at the data in terms of the enormous increase in the number of homeless people in the country and particularly the increase in families with children. I see it not only in my own home State in cities like Detroit and others, but across the country. And it strikes me that's something has gone wrong in America that's causing this to happen.

People don't want to be homeless. They don't want to be out in the cold in the dead of winter now. People are lined up to sleep on every hot air grate in Washington. We don't have enough hot air grates to go around just for the homeless people here in the city of Washington.

That's the reality we're seeing. So the issue you've raised about the causes is key. It's one thing to provide the shelters—and clearly we should do that. The country is way behind. I think the administration has pretended that this problem doesn't exist. In fact, it's made a lot of policy decisions to make the problem worse in terms of housing cutbacks and so forth.

But it seems to me that while we're providing housing alternatives for people who are homeless we've got to find out why the population of homeless people is increasing across the country and why it seems to be cutting through the society in different ways.

I have talked with people and I have seen stories on television of people who were gainfully employed as recently as a year or two ago, people who had a long history of working and had been self-supporting, not somebody that was released from a mental institution but somebody who was plugged into the society making their own way. Then either their job disappears or the company shuts down and they're in an area where unemployment is very high and one thing leads to another and the next thing they know they are out of money. They may not have anybody in their family that can help and they suddenly become part of the homeless population, having never imagined that that might happen to them.

But what's driving this? Why is it in a country as wealthy as ours, in terms of all the resources and the creativity and everything else that we have, the abundance that we have in so many ways that we see in television advertising and everything else—how is that we have more and more people in our society becoming homeless who clearly don't want to be, who want to work, and have the abilities to be able to work but the society somehow is moving in a direction that's leaving them behind.

I'd like to get more of your own sense for the causes of the creation of this larger and larger population of homeless people.

Mr. RILEY. That's the most important question, because the most important thing is that we find long-term solutions to the problem.

COMMITMENT FOR DECENT HOUSING FORGOTTEN

First of all, is the fact that a poor person needs assistance to get decent housing. A poor person, even a working poor person, can't afford housing on the private market. That's why 50 years ago Congress started the housing program, or 60 years ago, of a national commitment of a safe, decent and sanitary home for every American. I think we've forgotten that.

The economic recovery, second, structurally has bypassed a growing hard-core segment of our society. The 7 percent unemployment historically is very high for any country. Those with little skills or no skills that were thrown out of the job market in the last recession are having a far more difficult time than any time in recent history in getting back in. Job training.

I've got in my wallet the name of a fellow I spent the night with at the shelter 3 weeks ago and it was a classic person who in the days of CETA I would have called down and said, "Here is a classic guy. He hasn't the skills. He wants to work." When I go down there I'm besieged with people, "Mr. Mayor, you know I need a job."

Senator RIEGLE. So they want to work?

Mr. RILEY. They want to work, certainly. So it's housing. It's the economic—it's employment, underemployment, training component. Then you've got the mentally ill problem which is very difficult and, as others have said, we deinstitutionalized which is a good national policy. It's great that we extended the freedom to people who were in institutions that it's got to be shown they have to be there. Perhaps they can function and enjoy liberty and freedom, but there was no followup on that.

I saw a fellow—and if any local press are here I wouldn't want to mention him specifically. He talked about playing football at a local high school and we talked about that experience. He had gone to college. And then obviously he had a mental illness and he just had a physical—you could tell he was very ill. Otherwise, he was fine. There was nothing in the system to care for him. So halfway houses for the mentally ill and some kind of followup.

I think those are three of the key problems. As we said earlier, when you're seeing in almost every city we survey more families with children showing up at these shelters, then you know that in terms of the Nation's housing policy something is seriously wrong.

Senator RIEGLE. My time is up but I'd like to hear any other brief comment that the other two panelists would want to make.

Mr. ABRAMSON. The only other thing I was going to accentuate was the change in the economy from manufacturing to services. When I go into our shelter and you see middle age men and women who were working out at International Harvester who were qualified to do the things they did in that manufacturing facility that's now been closed down and neither the husband nor the wife are able to get employment or they are underemployed based on what they were making before because they haven't been able to handle

the transition and the job training opportunities are just not there and not available.

Also, I would agree with Mayor Riley that we've got so many 25 to 35 year olds who either have never held a job or who have held a job in a fast food restaurant or something of that nature but have never gotten to the point of having the tools to make them marketable in society today. And that's a real, real problem. And the families, I think there's a direct correlation between the manufacturing to service change that's had a convulsion in our cities and the fact that we need now 50 more family units in Louisville, KY because we've got all these guys who used to be working at Ford or used to work at GE or used to work at International Harvester and/or their wives, and they all need now some place to live because they simply cannot find work or they are so underemployed they can't afford—they've lost their home because they couldn't afford the mortgage payments.

Mr. FLYNN. Senator, let me just underscore one other point here. I mentioned the dramatic cuts in affordable housing. I talked about the deinstitutionalization. I talked about the growing poor. That's a big issue because there are changes in Federal regulations. There's less money for job training. For example, the mayor talked about a shift from manufacturing to service-based economy.

Boston has one of the lowest unemployment rates, if not the lowest unemployment rate, of any major city in America. The economy is strong. But the problem is that of the people who live in the city of Boston, many cannot afford the exorbitantly high cost of housing and the Federal subsidies are not keeping anywhere near pace with the scarcity of housing in our city. And the job training doesn't allow them to participate in uplifting them out of this poverty area into middle income to give them the opportunity to afford housing.

So it's a combination of things and added to that the Tax Code which is further going to exacerbate and discourage home ownership. If you look at housing starts in this country across this country, for the first time since post-World War II, you're seeing rather significant cutbacks in housing stock and housing construction in our country as well.

A whole myriad of things are leading to the growing problem of homelessness in America.

Senator RIEGLE. Well, I appreciate your testimony today and your comments and I appreciate your commitment to doing something to try to solve the problem. We want to help you.

Mr. FLYNN. Thank you, Senator.

Senator CRANSTON. Senator Sarbanes.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR SARBANES

Senator SARBANES. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I want to join Senator Riegle in thanking you for holding these hearings so promptly at the beginning of the 100th Congress to focus attention on this very pressing issue and I want to thank this very able and distinguished panel of mayors.

It's one of the sad comments about our society that in the midst of supposed affluence we are confronted with this problem and haven't come to grips with it in any realistic or sensible fashion.

I want to follow up a bit on the issues raised by Senator Riegle.

ONE-FOURTH OF SHELTER PEOPLE HAVE JOBS

As I understand from your testimony, about a quarter to a third of the people in your shelters actually have jobs and are employed and are earning a wage; is that correct?

Mr. RILEY. In some form or another. Miss Waxman told me that the data figure overall would be 20 percent are working either full time or part time.

Senator SARBANES. Does that square with data from the other cities?

Mr. FLYNN. Between 20 and 25 percent. We estimate about one-fourth of the people. In our shelters we see vans at 8 o'clock in the morning picking up people and taking them to places of employment and then they find their way back there at 5:30 or 6 in the evening.

Senator SARBANES. In those instances where people are working and earning an income, the problem is that if they could find affordable housing they would be in a position to move out of the shelters pretty quickly. Is that correct?

Mr. RILEY. That's correct.

Mr. FLYNN. That's right.

Mr. ABRAMSON. Right.

Senator SARBANES. Now before these various assisted housing programs were so severely cut back, both in terms of public housing support for the local communities and in terms of assisted housing in the private sector, would you say that you would have been able probably to find housing for them in your communities if the programs had continued at the levels that we previously had and with the eligibility requirements that prevailed then before they were so drastically tightened?

Mr. RILEY. Yes, sir.

Mr. ABRAMSON. We would. You know, the maintenance money—we went over 2½ years with 700 of our 6,000 public housing units left vacant because we couldn't get the maintenance funds.

Senator SARBANES. Well, I'm glad you touched on that point. I think it's an utter outrage to drastically slash the maintenance money for public housing. I don't agree with the policy of not building additional units, but that's a different issue you can argue. But, why we would take a capital stock that's there and available and for a relatively, I gather, small expenditure of money could be brought up to standard and immediately accommodate people, is beyond me. You say 700 out of your 6,000 units?

Mr. ABRAMSON. Up until about 6 months ago when the funding finally came through, we sat for 1½ years almost 2 years, with 700 out of 6,000 units sitting vacant.

Senator SARBANES. Do you have comparable problems in Charleston and in Boston in that regard?

Mr. FLYNN. Yes, indeed we do. We have HUD properties, for example, that at the end of a 20-year period I believe it is, means

many of them are coming onboard to be terminated, HUD has a policy that, a Congressman who represents part of Boston, Barney Frank, has been very active on; and that is to not allow HUD to sell off these properties which are currently at affordable levels. I think there are about 7,000 of these units which would devastate the housing stock in the city of Boston because they are mostly occupied by low-income minority people.

So we are hoping that the Congress will take action on that. We call them the distressed properties that you people will be taking a major role on as well. So you raise a great point and add to that this point about the Federal Government appears to be wanting to get out of the housing business and it's not an inhumane policy—it's no policy that the Federal Government has.

Senator SARBANES. Mayor Riley.

Mr. RILEY. We have the same problem, Senator. What many people don't understand is that housing authorities have no additional money and the rents that they charge relate to the income, as it should. In many housing authorities, probably in every one, a number of your tenants pay negative rent. That is, their income is so low that they don't pay any rent and actually the housing authority subsidizes the utility. So without modernization money they can't fix them up because they can't get any other money. They don't have any taxing mechanism and it's a problem in our city and every city in the country.

I think if one were to study the public housing stock that exists now and compare that with what existed 20 years ago and then compare the demographics of our country then and now, the growth of our country, the cost of housing, I think it would be a staggering figure of how much less we now have in terms of housing stock for our low-income citizens. I read somewhere where some feel there's a deficit of 10 million units in our country right now.

Senator SARBANES. Did you also say that about a fourth or a quarter of the people in your shelters you think have significant mental illness and need to be handled on that basis?

Mr. RILEY. Yes, 49 percent of the cities.

Mr. FLYNN. It varies, but in Boston in the shelters it's probably—Rich Ring who is the director of the Pine Street Inn says that in women's case it's about 99 percent of the women there have mental problems and about 50 percent of the men have mental problems. And this number is verified by such groups as the Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless who are very active and committed to this issue along with us.

Senator CRANSTON. Let me ask one question. What percentage are women in the shelters?

Mr. FLYNN. It's a much greater percentage of men, of course—15 percent are women.

EXISTING UNUSED HOUSING STOCK

Senator SARBANES. Mr. Chairman, I see my time is up. Let me just say I think as we address the housing legislation that one of the things that we need to keep very much in our minds is the problem that Mayor Abramson and the others have referred to,

and that is, existing housing stock that is unused and that for a reasonable expenditure of maintenance and rehabilitation money can be brought up to standard and made available at affordable rents within a relatively short period of time. It's just crazy to have 700 units sitting there idle which with a certain degree of rehabilitation and maintenance could be available for housing.

The long-term objective is that we ought not to need the shelters. The shelter network ought to go out of existence because we've solved the problem. It seems to me that's one quick way at least we can help.

Mr. ABRAMSON. Senator, could I add one more dimension to that before you give up your time?

Senator SARBANES. Yes.

Mr. ABRAMSON. We have 6,000 units in our community when you talk about maintenance. And 50 percent of them are one bedroom or less. Out of the 3,400 families on the waiting list for our public housing facilities, 90 percent of them need two bedrooms or more. So when you look at your housing policy don't forget the regulations because when we then go to HUD and we ask them to break through a wall to create a two bedroom apartment from two one bedroom apartments they say that's fine except they pay us our maintenance money based on the number of units.

So we lose maintenance money when we step up to the plate and respond to the demand of the waiting list. So even the regulations cut against an opportunity to be responsive to the situation regarding maintenance.

Senator CRANSTON. Thank you very much, Senator Sarbanes.

Senator DODD.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR DODD

Senator DODD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and let me add my voice to those of Senator Sarbanes and Senator Riegle in congratulating you on holding these hearings in a prompt way and I gather this afternoon we're going to have to at least consider the $50 million bill and my hope is as well that we will be able to take action on a bill similar to the House bill. I don't know what indication you have, Mr. Chairman, that we'll be able to get the leadership to move on the comprehensive bill that the leadership in the House has endorsed. Do you have any indication at all?

Senator CRANSTON. Well, we intend to take action in this subcommittee and then in the full committee very swiftly on overall housing legislation and specifically on the major proposal analogous to the House.

Senator DODD. It will have to be referred, won't it, as well to Labor and Finance?

Senator CRANSTON. Yes, it will have to go to several committees, but we will coordinate these committees activities and try to get swift action.

Senator DODD. I applaud you for that. I think it's extremely important. I hate to see us lag behind the House on that.

Senator CRANSTON. We're not lagging behind them at all. We are ready to go.

Senator DODD. Good.

Let me congratulate as well the mayors and welcome my good friend, Ray Flynn, a former college mate back some years ago. We're getting older, Ray. But I want to commend you and Mayor Riley for the mayors' report on the homeless. I think it's an excellent, excellent study and it raises some very worthwhile questions, one of which was touched upon by Senator Sarbanes in his last question. That is, dealing with the chronically mentally ill which you identify as some 29 percent fall into that category. I wonder if you might just define chronically mentally ill and whether or not that chronically mentally ill captures the drug abuser, the alcoholic? How do you break that down and is the number actually larger if you consider other less chronically ill cases?

Mr. RILEY. The chronically mentally ill does not include the substance abuser, a substantial portion of which are found in our shelters as well. The chronically mentally ill are just those who have continually been ill, many of whom at one time or another were institutionalized but because of their illness can't function in the community and don't have a family or someone to take care of them and we just lack the other services—the halfway houses and the programs in the community to take care of them.

But I think it's an interesting issue which we could spend all day talking about the city and why the assault on the city and the city programs in the last 6 years has been so bad, why the loss of revenue sharing is so bad, because cities have a disproportionate responsibility in a whole lot of national problems—caring for the elderly, caring for the poor as well as having the hospitals, the colleges, the universities, the art galleries, the museums, the core of our culture—and yet we're just a small part—I'm one-seventh of our metropolitan area.

You're what, one-third or one-fourth?

Mr. ABRAMSON. One-third.

Mr. RILEY. And what are you, Ray, as part of your metropolitan area?

Mr. FLYNN. We have 2.5 million people in the metropolitan area.

Mr. RILEY. What does your city have?

Mr. FLYNN. About 600,000.

Mr. RILEY. So a fourth. So what you get in the cities, however, these citizens come to the cities because they're not going to have a shelter in the suburbs and of the chronically mentally ill I'd say 99 percent of them in our country end up being in the cities looking for help.

Senator DODD. The point I'm trying to drive at here is that figure of 29 percent is actually a very low number when you consider alcoholics and drug abusers that most would fall in that category of having serious health problems.

Mr. RILEY. That's correct.

Senator DODD. And of mental dependency. So that number goes up. Now how does that number break down with regard to the 56 percent of the homeless who are single men? What percentage of chronically mentally ill of the 56 percent who are men?

Mr. RILEY. Probably you could use the same percentage of around 30 percent, 29 or 30 percent. And we found in our study that about that same percentage——

Senator DODD. If you add the alcoholics and the addicts, what does that number rise to?

Mr. RILEY. If you add them both together, you would probably be close to 60 percent.

Senator DODD. 60 percent of the single men?

Mr. RILEY. Yes, sir.

Senator DODD. How about the 15 percent who are women, what percent would be alcoholics, drug addicts, and chronically mentally ill?

Mr. RILEY. Probably about the same percentage, maybe a tad higher.

FAMILIES IN SHELTERS

Senator DODD. Now in the family breakdown, the 28 percent that are families—and those are families—that's a mother with children, a single parent family, or are you getting what traditionally we think of as a whole family, the mother and father and children?

Mr. RILEY. We've seen the whole family. Probably more frequently it's one parent with children.

Senator DODD. And what percentage of the parents in that case fall into that category of chronically mentally ill or drug addicts or alcoholics?

Mr. RILEY. I would say a much smaller percentage.

Senator DODD. Much smaller?

Mr. RILEY. We don't have that. That would just be my general observation both in Charleston of working with that shelter as well as understanding the study that was done.

Senator DODD. Has there been any effort at all—I should point out as well—and Mayor Flynn talked about Boston and Massachusetts and its economic condition. Its neighboring State of Connecticut arguably is in as good a position if not better per capita earnings. In the State of Connecticut, it's about $18,500 per capita earnings, with an unemployment rate of about 4 percent. And yet we have well over 25,000 people in the State of Connecticut that are homeless.

Litchfield County, which may be one of the five or six most affluent counties in the United States, has a crippling problem with several of its cities with regard to the homeless every day. So this problem in fact it may be more exacerbated by the service industry affluent States that have——

Mr. FLYNN. Senator, that's the contradiction that a lot of people don't understand but you and I understand because we live there and we see it. In a community that is thriving, that is healthy, that is moving forward and a number of people are earning a pretty good income, the short side of that is that there are people who are being left behind and that are not prospering or benefiting from that economy. There are only so many people who participate in the very successful high-tech industry in the city of Boston. There are an awful lot of other people who are working in the hotels that cut the lettuce and make the salads and so forth, and they are not able to pay the high cost of housing when you're talking about average housing costing about $147,000 to $156,000 per unit and the wages are just not commensurate with these extraordinarily high

The change in our nation's economy in recent years has resulted in two new types of homeless people: young men age 20-35 who have never held jobs or who have lost jobs and are unable to find new work, and older men and women who worked for years in manufacturing jobs but can no longer find jobs for which they are qualified.

Our education system also must share the responsibility for this group of homeless people because young people age 20-35 should have the skills to find the new jobs being created today in the service sector.

While a redirection has occurred in this nation's job training program under the Job Training Partnership Act, there's little doubt that we collectively fail to do an adequate job of retraining the tens of thousands of manufacturing workers whose jobs have been eliminated and who can't find new work.

The wholesale release of mentally ill patients from this nation's government-operated institutions several years ago has resulted today in one of the largest groups of homeless people. In city after city surveys of homeless people indicate that as many as 40% of those questioned admit to having been treated for mental illness.

This group of homeless people is very hard-core because their illnesses, untreated by qualified medical staff, prevent them from improving themselves. Attaining jobs is virtually impossible, and friends and relatives obviously have abandoned them.

The third cause of the tremendous increase in the number of homeless people - the failure of our federal government's housing policy to address the critical need for low income housing - is responsible for perhaps the fastest growing segment of the homeless population, the homeless family.

I would like to spend a few minutes discussing this particular issue in more detail because it is my understanding that this Senate sub-committee is in the process of developing new federal housing legislation.

Addressing the homeless issue, Senators, within the context of creating a new federal housing policy for the 1990's is critical.

Let us examine how recent federal housing policy has exacerbated the homeless problem in America's cities.

Since 1981 federally authorized funds for housing programs have decreased by 70% - from $30 billion to about $8 billion.

Our nation's public housing stock is in an advanced state of deterioration. Maintenance programs, so badly needed to halt the decay, have been subjected to sharp budget cuts. Many public housing apartment buildings are in such an advanced state of decay that they are beyond renovation and require demolition. As a result, the number of public housing units available for low income housing is decreasing significantly. And many of those units that remain need major repairs.

Despite the well-publicized poor condition of this nation's public housing stock, virtually every city in the United States has a long list of families waiting to get into public housing. That's because even though the federal government has lessened its commitment to low income public housing, the availability of private low-income housing also has declined.

Over the last decade the number of rental households earning under $10,000 annually increased by three million. During the same period the number of rental units affordable to these low-income households declined by two million.

It's no wonder that thousands of families put their names on years-long waiting lists to get into dilapidated public housing - they have no choice!

Other federal budget cuts, in such programs as Aid to Families with Dependent Children, have contributed significantly to the problem by reducing the income available for housing.

The 1986 Tax Reform Act also is now contributing to the nation's shortage of low-income housing. Regardless of the appropriateness of the tax shelters involved, there's no question that tax reform has eliminated or greatly curtailed most federal tax incentives for the private investment in low income housing development.

And much of the existing privately owned, federally assisted housing will be at risk over the next decade as long-term contracts for federal subsidies begin to expire, with the owners likely to opt out of low income occupancy requirements.

The conclusion one reaches is that while recent federal government decisions regarding low income housing support have contributed significantly to the homeless problem, decisions being made today, and those that will be made tomorrow, will also have a great impact on the homeless issue.

The question is - what should the federal government do?

To address the immediate needs of homeless people in our nations' cities, I urge you to support passage of HR 558, which will provide $500 million in new funding for the homeless during the current fiscal year. Most of this money will be used to supplement existing emergency assistance programs through such agencies as FEMA, HUD and HHS.

The emergency assistance programs funded through these agencies will address the fastest growing component of the homeless issue - the homeless family. HR 558 will also provide additional funds for much-needed health care for the homeless.

I also implore you and your colleagues in the Congress not to make decisions in a vacuum. Unrelated and independent actions by the federal government in recent years have already contributed significantly to the homeless problem. I would like to reiterate just two examples of this: the reduction of maintenance budgets for public housing has reduced the number of public housing units available today; and, last year's decision to eliminate General Revenue Sharing is yet another impediment to local governments' ability to take up the slack caused by federal cutbacks.

And the decision you will make this year on funding the Community Development Block Grant program is critical to cities as we attempt to deal with the homeless problem.

This sub-committee's work in developing a new federal housing policy for the 1990's is critical to our collective efforts to address the growing homeless problem. As you develop this new policy, I urge you to take into consideration how past decisions regarding public housing have exacerbated this nation's low income housing problem and its homeless problem.

I also urge you to examine current public housing regulations so that local governments will have more flexibility in dealing with their low income housing needs.

I will conclude this presentation with some information about how some inflexible federal regulations regarding public housing deter local efforts.

Louisville has about 6,000 public housing units, half of which are one-bedroom or efficiency apartments. There are three thousand, four hundred families who are waiting to get into public housing when vacancies occur. 90% of those on the waiting list need multi-bedroom apartments.

We have some unoccupied one-bedroom apartments among those 6,00 units. Since HUD regulations prohibit more than two people from living in them (even a couple with an infant are ineligible for the one-bedroom units), we would like to transform them into two and three bedroom apartments. That way we could take a few of the 3,400 families on the waiting list and put them into public housing.

But when we proposed this to HUD, we ran smack into "Catch 22," which is: if Louisville reduces its total number of public housing units by transforming empty one-bedroom units into family-sized apartments, we forfeit a portion of our federal maintenance funds. And, of course, the shortage of those funds is already a very significant problem in Louisville and in public housing projects across the nation.

The homeless problem in our nation is not going to be an easy issue to resolve. But I believe the Congress can help address the issue immediately by passing and implementing HR 558.

And I think this sub-committee can have a tremendous impact in addressing the long-range homeless issue by restructuring the federal housing policy to, at the very least, prevent further deterioration of our nation's public housing stock, and at the optimum, significantly increase the federal commitment to providing low income housing to our poorest citizens.

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this vital issue with you.

housing costs. And when you think about the enormous reduction—75 percent—as we talked about in the area of low-income housing subsidies from the Federal Government, that's what's causing this.

So people should understand that it's in areas like Hartford, Boston, and New York that have a lot of development and boom and growth in wages, that there's a growing poor. That's what this disparity really is all about, a large growing population of poor and, correspondingly, a large population of growing wealthy.

Senator DODD. I'm almost out of time. Let me just ask one more question just to make that point clear.

I've told you how affluent Connecticut is. Hartford and New Haven rank as the fourth and seventh poorest cities in America in the middle of a State that, without any question, is enjoying a prosperity unmatched anywhere else in the country.

Mr. FLYNN. Right.

Senator DODD. What would you do in the short term—and I don't want to focus too much on the mentally ill question, but you accurately pointed out that going back a number of years ago there was the mental health community which pushed very hard and very successfully here in the Congress for deinstitutionalization. We acquiesced and agreed. I think most of the community did, that this was a wise decision to get people who could function outside of those institutions, provided there was a support structure at the community level to help them.

Obviously, we never filled the latter part of that commitment and that was to help support States and cities in building that community-based support system for them.

Given this growing problem, given the figures you've given me this morning which go beyond 30 percent and double that if you take into consideration alcoholism and drug abuse which require treatment, what would you suggest in the short or near term? I'd just ask you quickly to go down it if you could, and if not I'll wait until my next turnaround, Mr. Chairman, but do we open up our institutions to get these people back in? Have you made studies as to what we ought to be doing or what the cost would be on a national level or at the local level to institute a community-based support system of halfway homes and treatment and so forth to be able to pick up as much as 50 percent of the community here that needs that kind of treatment and help?

Putting aside the housing question, if you will for a minute, which I completely agree with my colleague from Maryland on and so forth, it seems to me this other part of it is essential and we need to be doing one or the other it seems to me. I would just be curious as to what your suggestions might be.

Mr. RILEY. Senator, I would introduce and pass the Urgent Relief for the Homeless Act which was introduced in the House which has a number of different categories to quickly get money into emergency kinds of programs.

I would try to get some additional funds through the health to mental health. You've got a lot of structural developing programs at the local level but the funding is very scarce and I would support funding for traditional transitional housing.

One thing about this issue in this wonderful country of ours is there are great leveraging opportunities. In every city in our country you've got a lot of volunteers, churches, other groups, working. So, with the money that's in H.R. 558, you are leveraging a tremendous amount of additional resources that can get at the problem right away.

ALCOHOLIC ISSUE

Mr. FLYNN. Senator, two points. The alcoholic issue, we have a very comprehensive program in the various shelters that in fact you'll be happy to hear works very well. Very rarely do things work exceptionally well in government. This is a program that if you show me the people with alcoholic problems in shelters, we have a program that addresses those needs and before you know it we've got a lot of those people squared away, going to AA meetings and so forth.

What we don't have, however, is job training opportunities for those people so that they can participate and be competitive in a very strong economy.

We pointed out the loss of Federal money in housing. I could show you the same figures—lower scale but the same percentagewise in the area of job training. So that they're not able to make the adjustment from the job they originally had which no longer exists to the new kind of job that has come into our newer economy across America and we don't have the job training money to connect them, to bridge that, the skills that they need to the opportunities that are available.

So those are just two areas—alcoholism and job training—to get them back and squared away.

Mr. ABRAMSON. I think really what Mayors Flynn and Riley are saying is that there is mosaic out there and each piece fits into the puzzle. And as you look at things, if you're going to do away with institutionalized-based mental health facilities, then there's got to be something that comes with that to support the ongoing need. And the same thing with job training for those folks and the same thing for housing. And if you do one in a vacuum, then you've missed out and the need list—the agenda of those truly in need in our community is lost.

Senator DODD. Thank you.

Mr. RILEY. Quickly, just one other thing, Senator. The Homeless Persons Survival Act, which I think Senators Gore and Moynihan have introduced, also has a number of initiatives that would particularly be helpful in the area of the mentally ill.

Senator CRANSTON. Senator Chafee.

Senator CHAFEE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Just a quick question. My home city, the capital city of our State, Providence, is certainly not a wealthy city; however, we have not been bothered until very recently by lack of housing but now, Mayor Flynn, many of your citizens are coming down and taking advantage of our relatively inexpensive housing so the result is the price of housing is going up and we are now encountering the problems that you're dealing with.

My question is this: The statistics show—and there's not much dispute over this I don't think—that if the Federal housing were built absent the so-called Davis-Bacon law, you would receive about 30 percent more housing. In other words, that adds about 30 percent to the cost.

If we embark on a housing program and try to get the maximum, what would be your position on exempting such housing from the so-called Davis-Bacon law, Mayor Flynn?

Mr. FLYNN. I would say that one of the things that we never want to lose sight of is that we want to make sure that people are able to participate in a meaningful way in the economy.

Why would we have people making less money and not able to support themselves and their families and have a roof over their head but not fair, adequate wages in their pockets to support their kids and their families?

So I think, Senator, the issue that was raised here today is the enormous amount of reduction that has come in the area of subsidized housing both in your State and my State and across this country—75 percent. No other department of Federal Government has been cut harder than the area of housing.

So it's really the cost of housing and the loss of Federal subsidies that is really putting the strain on so many Americans today and I don't think that reduced wages to encourage further housing creation is the issue at all.

Senator CHAFEE. Mayor Riley, do you have any thoughts on that?

Mr. RILEY. I would be very surprised if Davis-Bacon adds 30 percent. In the work in Charleston, that hasn't been the case. Certainly any study of ways to make housing built more efficiently and more effectively and serve more people should be welcomed by all.

I would have to agree with Mayor Flynn that as well, however, the fair and proper wages for those who work are obviously we all have to be interested in.

Mr. FLYNN. Senator, could I give you just one quick thing? You might have read this in the Providence Journal or even Boston papers or whatever. We have property in Boston that's very, very valuable. I dispose of the property through a process whereby I give it to the bricklayers and the laborers' union for $1. They put the quality and craftsmanship into the building of townhouses, quality brick townhouses.

They are able to build those houses at, say, $70,000 that ordinarily would cost about $150,000, but because of keeping the costs down through the price of the property being $1 and then we're able to get a lottery for people to purchase those units at very affordable levels.

So in Boston—and I think that this is a program that John Kerry is going to introduce with us as well—a housing partnership that you probably will be hearing about whereby you get labor, the church groups, the archdiocese, the business community, government, all pooling their resources so you can keep the price of housing down for first-time home buyers at affordable levels.

Senator CHAFEE. Thank you.

Senator CRANSTON. Any further questions or can we go on to the next panel?

Senator SARBANES. Could I ask one quick question of the mayors?

Senator CRANSTON. Yes.

Senator SARBANES. I'd like you to address this assertion we occasionally are given by people who say that these people want to be out on the streets, that they could come in off the streets if they wanted to and they don't want to for one reason or another and, therefore, that's part of the problem. What is your response to that assertion.

Mr. FLYNN. We've all heard that so many times, Senator, and it's just an outrage and it's an affront when we hear people from outside this room make those observations and, unfortunately, they're even made by people who should know better, but these statements are in fact made.

I don't know anybody that really wants to sleep on a park bench in subfreezing temperature and go to sleep on that bench with no food. That's just simply not the case and for anybody to make those kinds of statements—I have to be rather blunt to you, that's the way I was brought up—I have to say that those people are ignorant when they make those kind of statements.

Mr. RILEY. Tell them to come to the shelters. They are in every city. Tell them to volunteer and see for themselves and they will find out categorically that simply is not the case.

Senator SARBANES. Thank you.

Senator CRANSTON. I want to thank you very, very much. You've been an excellent and very informative and very constructive panel.

Mr. RILEY. We thank you, Senator.

Mr. FLYNN. Thank you.

Senator CRANSTON. I would like now for the people on panel No. 2 to come forward.

STATEMENT BY SENATOR ALAN J. DIXON

Senator DIXON. Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to be here this morning as the Senate Subcommittee on Housing meets to address a matter of great importance to the entire Nation. The U.S. Senate this afternoon will vote on an emergency supplemental appropriation of $50 million to aid the homeless. There is no doubt that this money is urgently needed. However, along with additional expenditures, we need to put a structure into place which will bring some continuity to the programs which serve the homeless.

For this reason, I will today, along with my colleague, Senator John Heinz, introduce the Emergency Food and Shelter Act of 1987. Over the last 2 years, we have worked to address the many problems which surround homelessness. This has been done primarily through appropriations for the emergency food and shelter program operated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Emergency Food and Shelter Program National Board.

What we will propose today is not new. Last May, the Banking Committee reported out S. 2507, legislation which authorized an Emergency Food and Shelter National Board, which, in conjunction with the Federal Emergency Management Agency [FEMA] and the Department of Housing and Urban Development [HUD], would oversee efforts to aid the homeless. This 2-year authorization will provide needed continuity.

The transitional living component of the bill will begin to address the long-term housing needs of the homeless. The shelter grants portion of the bill will also provide assistance to shelters which have been limited to addressing basic, immediate needs of the homeless.

As we all know, the homeless have needs which are greater than a bowl of soup and a night's sleep on a cot. We must begin to address the root causes of homelessness and provide assistance to these people which will help them to find employment, education, permanent housing, mental and physical health care and other services which will lead to their independence and stability.

Finding a solution to hunger and homelessness is the responsibility of all of us. The private sector, as well as State and local governments, is already actively involved in providing services to the homeless. The President has proposed increased funding for these programs in his fiscal year 1988 budget. This legislation will establish that the Federal Government, although not solely responsible, is accepting an equal role in helping to alleviate the suffering of millions of Americans.

I urge my colleagues on the Subcommittee on Housing to take a close look at this initiative and join me in the fight against homelessness.

Senator CRANSTON. There is also a statement from Mayor Maureen O'Connor of San Diego, that we will place in the record.

[The complete prepared statement of Maureen O'Connor follows:]

Senator CRANSTON. I would like to ask Valerie Harper and Ross Pologe to join us now at the table. I want to repeat that we would like each of you to summarize your statements in not more than 5 minutes. Your full statement if you have a prepared one, will go in the record.

We are delighted to have with us now Miss Valerie Harper. We all know her because of her spectacular acting career. Many of us have not been aware that in private life she has taken a very active role in helping see to it that the poor people in California are fed.

And Ross Pologe who is with us, is the direct provider, helping the young homeless people in Baltimore, MD.

We thank you both for your good work and we welcome you to this hearing. Valerie, do you want to start?

STATEMENT OF VALERIE HARPER, LOVE IS FEEDING EVERYONE, HOLLYWOOD, CA

Ms. HARPER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am privileged and honored to be here. Thank you, Senator Cranston, my Senator, for providing me the opportunity to come and speak.

I feel that I am speaking not just for the homeless but for the "homed," the people that have homes, the people who are concerned about the situation. Because actually as human beings, we are one and the same.

The difference between you and I and the good Senator, Senator Dodd, everyone here, and the homeless is usually a job and a roof. It's that simple. We are at a state I think of national catastrophe and we are also on the threshold of a magnificent opportunity. Often things don't get done until they are seen. The homeless issue is more than visible. It's almost heart-breakingly tangible daily in most American lives.

I don't want to go into how bad it is. I think everyone here is pretty much conversant with that and the experts in the field, such as Ross and others that will speak, can give very detailed descriptions of that.

LOS ANGELES SITUATION

I just know that L.A. is now fast becoming known as the homeless capital of the country, that we have had 39 degree weather, that there were four deaths, and all kinds of suffering occurring, that Mayor Bradley opened up City Hall and other public buildings, at night for the homeless to sleep there. In terms of my background as a hunger activist in the hunger response community since 1977, I have learned that in global and national and domestic hunger, you have two factors. Either people can raise the food they need and eat it or they can buy it and eat it. That's real basic.

How do you respond to those who don't have food? You have relief, which is a meal; but really what you're after is development, which is empowerment, self-sufficiency. And what we have now in America are growing numbers of people in such extraordinarily disastrous situations. However, they don't have to be in these circumstances. That's the good part.

There is an extraordinary opportunity that I wanted to speak about and the emphasis that the $500 million, every penny of which is not only needed, but in fact I would say is a modest—I would say it's a respectable start. The $50 million bill is like a downpayment on the $500 million legislation which I see as a first installment of getting the job done. It's absolutely doable. Homelessness and hunger could end in America if it were the priority, and I happily see it becoming that priority.

The opportunity that exists is right here in this city. One example of it—it is not the only way, but it is a darned good way. It's extraordinarily effective, cost effective—I've seen it with my own eyes grow, and it is on 2d and D Streets N.E. It's the Community for Creative Nonviolence shelter. And it's more than the building renovation that has occurred. What I see it providing is that which is now missing, that safety net through which a lot of American citizens are falling—this would close that gap.

I went through the building this morning. I had seen it in May when I was here and at that time it was a shelter. It has housed upward—the most residents that they ever had at one time was 1,100 and with only one shower and three bathrooms, far superior to the street, but not an environment in which a person could move on from.

The shelters cannot be warehouses. it's kind and good of the churches and civic buildings to open their doors but homes are needed. I've been out there in L.A. at halfway houses and I've been at soup kitchens and I have been at pantry programs where I've seen with my own eyes a mother take the paper bag of groceries and sit on the curb and divide it up because her children are that hungry. That's Los Angeles and that's where there's sunshine and fruit and bounty all year long.

That is intolerable and we are now at a point—the Senate and the House are at an absolute point where they can make a major breakthrough and impact by passing that legislation and immediately.

The bill for me is essential. There are people that will have to make adjustments and so forth and I take into consideration the budget that you all have to struggle with and the deficit, but this must be a priority. I do think it has to come into our hearts and our minds in a new way.

About half of the bill looks like it would be going to the most needed situation. That's renovation. There are buildings all over this country, thousands of them, that if the right amount of money was put in to renovate, make it not just a place, but make it be a place in which people could settle themselves, center themselves, experience their humanity, experience their dignity. The homeless have dignity and this kind of a shelter would allow them to maintain it, to get legal counseling, job counseling, counseling on getting housing, remedial reading. I'm speaking specifically of the facility I saw this morning, the one Mitch Snyder and Carol Finley and the members of the Community for Creative Nonviolence are running.

I saw a 21-bed detox center. I saw an infirmary for 36 beds. I saw special partitions for people who are in wheel chairs and need a little more space. I saw six bed compartments and this was very touching—Mitch said to me, "I've been in this for 15 years. This is

the first time I can offer beds. Till now it's been only cots and mats and the floor." And we walked by and he said, "Oh, look, Val, a drinking fountain." He said there's going to be a drinking fountain on each floor. The outside of the building is going to be finished in such a way that is pleasant to view—I'm not talking frills. I'm talking about a respectful consideration of the human beings who are putting their lives back together in such a place.

This place people can move on from and that's what I am interested in happening and I know that is the desire of the people working in the field. We can't keep throwing blankets and money and soup and meals at people—and I do it myself. You stop your car and say, "What can I do for you?" They want water or juice or I can give some money. That's not what I want from myself, from my city, from my State, from my Government. We can do much better than that. We have to do what is so American in spirit. It's so in our blood, in our background, in our guts as Americans to help our neighbors. The old barn-raising. If Johnstons' barn burned down, they said, "Well, is next Sunday good for you?" "No." Then the Sunday after the community rallied and supported and built the barn with and for their neighbors.

I can say that the other aspect of the renovation of these particular buildings—and you use Mitch and Carol's place as a model—is that the health care facilities, the job counseling, the legal assistance—all these facilities and services would be under one roof and would be available to the homeless not just in that particular building but to all the homeless of the city. They would avail themselves of those services. There are doctors, nurses, psychiatrists, psychologists, all kinds of people ready and willing—dental assistants, dentists—to do the work. In the basement there's also a dental clinic.

This is all happening on 2d and D and if you have not seen it or your colleagues haven't, I would—I know Senator Cranston has inspected the premises. There are many things happening in other cities. I just think we have to get this money. Every penny of the $500 million is needed and needed now. It was needed yesterday. It is January. There are people cold and out there and they should not be.

Our Government has to support the grassroots movement and, believe you me, there's a grassroots demand at all levels of our society that homelessness end and that we respond appropriately.

The emphasis on the familiies is another good, excellent part of this bill that I would applaud because that's what I've seen a lot of—whole families in the street after factories have closed down. We've heard it over and over.

The last point I guess I want to make is that common sense and human decency dictate that we move and move effectively and quickly, and that really is in Congress' side of the court. You must stand firm and I know there's going to be opposition and I would just encourage you to get in there and fight for every bit of it.

I think that's it. Yesterday I met with some people from Partnership for the Homeless in New York City who are doing a fabulous job of coalescing all the churches and creating a network getting linens to where needed and food delivered and so forth. But the truth of that is, New York's budget is something like $270 million for New York City. So I want you to keep that in mind, that $500

Honorable Mayor Maureen O'Connor

San Diego, California

GOOD MORNING CHAIRMAN CRANSTON AND MEMBERS OF THE SENATE SUBCOMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND URBAN AFFAIRS. I AM MAUREEN O'CONNOR, MAYOR OF THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA.

SAN DIEGO'S HOMELESS NUMBER APPROXIMATELY 3,000. WE KNOW THAT THE CHRONICALLY HOMELESS NUMBER ABOUT 750 AND THAT THOSE THAT ARE HOMELESS FOR DURATIONS OF ONE MONTH OR MORE NUMBER UPWARDS TO 2, 250.

THE REASONS FOR THIS PROBLEM ARE NUMEROUS BUT RESEARCH IN OUR CITY SHOWS THAT THE PROBLEM RESULTS FROM:

1. LACK OF LOW COST HOUSING.
2. LACK OF JOBS IN AREAS WHERE ECONOMIC AND INDUSTRIAL CHANGE HAS BEEN DRAMATIC -- SPECIFICALLY IN SUCH INDUSTRIES AS LUMBER, STEEL AND AUTOMOBILE.
3. THE LACK OF FUNDING FROM THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT FOR MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS.

WHO ARE THE HOMELESS IN MY CITY? IN APRIL 1986, THE REGIONAL TASK FORCE ON THE HOMELESS, WHICH I CHAIR, ESTIMATED THAT OF THIS POPULATION 5 PER CENT ARE YOUTH, 75 PERCENT ARE ADULT MEN, WITH 25 PERCENT BEING ADULT WOMEN. FAMILIES ARE ROUGHLY 20 PERCENT OF OUR HOMELESS POPULATION AND FROM EVERY INDICATION A GROWING SEGMENT AS WELL.

WHAT IS TROUBLESOME TO OUR COMMUNITY IS THAT OVERALL, ABOUT 50 PERCENT OF THE HOMELESS ARE ALSO MENTALLY ILL. I MENTION THIS BECAUSE THIS IS ONE OF THE PROBLEMS THAT NEEDS PRIORITY CONSIDERATION -- THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAS CUT BACK ON FUNDING OF PROGRAMS THAT HELP THESE PEOPLE AND CITIES LIKE OURS ARE BEING ROCKED BY THE SHEER NUMBERS THAT ROAM OUR STREETS. WE ARE STRETCHED TO OUR MAXIMUM IN WORKING WITH THEM.

ON MONDAY, 250 HOMELESS MEN AND WOMEN CAME TO THE SAN DIEGO CITY COUNCIL. THE GROUP WANTED JOBS. THE GROUP WANTED HOUSING. THE GROUP NEEDS ASSISTANCE. SOME OF THOSE 250 HOMELESS THAT WERE IN CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON MONDAY WERE DRUG ABUSERS AND OTHERS WERE MENTALLY ILL. DRUG ABUSERS AND THE MENTALLY ILL CAN NOT GET JOBS WITHOUT SOME PSYCHOLOGICAL GUIDANCE. WITH A CUT BACK IN FEDERAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS FOR MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT, WE NEED A CONCRETE ANSWER FROM THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AS TO HOW A CITY IS GOING TO RESOLVE THIS ISSUE.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA IS ALSO REELING FROM AN INFLUX OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE LOST THEIR JOBS IN SUCH INDUSTRIES AS THE AUTOMOBILE, RUBBER, LUMBER, AND STEEL IN OTHER AREAS OF THE COUNTRY. THESE REPRESENT A GROUP OF MEN AND WOMEN EAGER TO WORK BUT UNABLE TO FIND JOBS THAT MATCH THEIR SKILLS. THEY DESPERATELY WANT TO REENTER THE THE MAINSTREAM OF SOCIETY THROUGH EMPLOYMENT.

THROUGH THE PRIVATE INDUSTRY COUNCIL/REGIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING CONSORTIUM WE HAVE A PROGRAM TO ASSIST THE HOMELESS CALLED THE DOWNTOWN HOMELESS PILOT TRAINING PROJECT THAT IS RIGHT NOW SERVING 30 HOMELESS INDIVIDUALS -- WORKING WITH THEM IN BASIC REMEDIAL COURSES, TRAINING COURSES AND JOB SEARCH. BUT THERE WERE 250 HOMELESS IN MY CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS -- WE NEED MORE STATE FUNDS TO DO THAT KIND OF PROJECT SO THOSE WHO WANT TO WORK CAN WORK OR BE RETRAINED FOR APPROPRIATE INDUSTRIES.

I COME TO YOU HAVING FED THE HOMELESS; HAVING TALKED WITH THE HOMELESS. I HAVE NOT ONLY BEEN TO SHELTERS IN MY CITY BUT IN NEW YORK CITY AND IN WASHINGTON, D.C. THE STORIES I HAVE HEARD AND THE DESPERATE FACES I HAVE SEEN UNDERSCORE THE FACT THAT

CITIES NEED HELP.

THERE IS A PAUCITY OF LOW INCOME HOUSING ALL ACROSS THE NATION. IN SAN DIEGO IT IS AN ACUTE PROBLEM. THE HOUSING AUTHORITY IS GRAPPLING WITH THAT PROBLEM BUT ADDITIONAL HUD FUNDS AND INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS WOULD HELP US AND ENCOURAGE OTHER CITIES TO RESOLVE THIS ISSUE. WE NEED STATES TO COME UP WITH TENANT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS AND MONIES THAT HELP CITIES CREATE MORE HOUSING.

HOUSING OF THE HOMELESS IS ALSO A CRITICAL ISSUE IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA. MANY OF YOU READ OF THE COLD SPELL THAT HIT AND RUINED OUR AVOCADO CROPS. THAT COLD SPELL ALSO TOOK 4 LIVES. THOSE PEOPLE WERE HOMELESS AND HAD NOWHERE TO GO. SHELTERS WERE FULL TO CAPACITY.

THERE ARE ONLY 12 EMERGENCY SHELTERS IN SAN DIEGO COUNTY, PROVIDING 743 SHELTER BEDS. WHILE 419 OF THESE BEDS ARE AVAILABLE TO ANY HOMELESS PERSON, THE REMAINING 324 ARE SPECIFICALLY TARGETED TO EITHER MEN-ONLY, WOMEN-ONLY OR FAMILIES ONLY. REMEMBER THERE ARE 3,000 HOMELESS IN MY CITY ALONE AND 5,000 COUNTY-WIDE. WHERE DO THERE REST GO EACH NIGHT? WE NEED FUNDING TO BUILD FACILITIES IN OUR AREA. WE DON'T HAVE A LARGE INVENTORY OF VACANT BUILDINGS FOR REHABILITATION. WE WOULD LIKE FUNDS TO BUILD THESE EMERGENCY SHELTERS.

I HAVE POINTED OUT A NUMBER OF WAYS THE FEDERAL AND STATE GOVERNMENTS CAN HELP US. LET ME EXPLAIN HOW LOCAL PEOPLE ARE BANDING TOGETHER AS WELL. THE REGIONAL TASK FORCE HAS AN INTERFAITH RESPONSE TO THE HOMELESS ISSUE. IT INVOLVES CHURCHES AND IS MODELED ON THE HOMELESS PROJECT IN NEW YORK CITY. WE ARE JUST STARTING WITH OUR PROJECT AND HAVE FIVE CHURCHES GETTING

INVOLVED WITH THE PROJECT. THIS WILL HELP WITH THE EMERGENCY SHELTER. THESE PEOPLE ARE VOLUNTEERING AND WE ARE SUPPLEMENTING THAT HELP WITH CITY SUPPORT AND FEDERAL FUNDS.

LET ME CLOSE THIS TESTIMONY WITH THESE RECOMMENDATIONS:

SUPPORT THE POLEY BILL WHICH ALLOCATES $500 MILLION FOR VARIOUS HOMELESS PROJECTS. THERE ARE SOLID PROJECTS INCLUDED IN THIS BILL WHICH WILL HELP A CITY LIKE MINE...THERE ARE FUNDS FOR EMERGENCY SHELTERS, TRANSITIONAL HOUSING AND SECTION 8 HOUSING THAT WE NEED AND CAN USE.

THERE ARE FUNDS FOR HEALTH CARE FOR THE HOMELESS AND A SURPLUS PROPERTY AND FACILITIES TO ASSIST THE HOMELESS THAT CAN HELP CITIES HOUSE AND SHELTER THE HOMELESS.

WE WOULD ASK AS YOU CONTINUE YOUR CONSIDERATIONS THAT YOU FURTHER INCLUDE IN YOUR COMPROMISES AND STUDIES A PROGRAM FOR BUILDING FOR THE HOMELESS. THE HOMELESS ARE NOT GOING AWAY IN 10 YEARS. WE HAVE SEEN THE POPULATION GROW AND ALL THE STATISTICS AND INFORMATION YOU HAVE HEARD TODAY UNDERSCORE THAT FACT.

THANK YOU FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE THE SAN DIEGO STORY WITH YOU TODAY.

million is a good, respectable start, but we have to put more money judiciously spent into this before it gets worse and worse and worse.

So I'm just saying as an American, as a voter, that those who don't vote because they don't have an address deserve our very best effort and they deserve it instantly. Thank you.

Senator CRANSTON. Thank you very much, Valerie, for a very heartfelt statement about a terribly human problem.

Senator SARBANES. Mr. Chairman, unfortunately, as so often happens here, I have to go to chair another meeting. Otherwise, I would stay here because of how important I think this subject is.

I did want to take a minute to welcome Ross Pologe, who's done an outstanding job in Baltimore as the executive director of the Fellowship of Lights, which is a moving force in the greater Baltimore shelter network, which he's going to be telling the committee about. And I simply want to underscore the work he and his associates have been doing and how important it is and I want to echo the chairman's comments in thanking Valerie Harper for a very moving statement on this issue.

Senator CRANSTON. Thank you, Senator Sarbanes.

Mr. Pologe.

STATEMENT OF ROSS POLOGE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, FELLOWSHIP OF LIGHTS, BALTIMORE, MD

Mr. POLOGE. Thank you, Senator Sarbanes.

I operate a shelter for runaway homeless youth in Baltimore City. I've been there for 12 years. I found it difficult to sit still in my seat back here because it seems that this hearing and hearings like this are so long overdue. I think I can say that for those of us who have been involved in working with this population over the years, it seems too painfully obvious the contradictions in this society, the paradox of wealth and affluence abounding and the abject poverty that the young people and families who come into our shelters on a daily basis, people who have no place to call home, represent.

It's sometimes debilitating to staff who are clearly committed to working with this population. It's a year round issue. It seems to reach crisis and epidemic proportions and the media wants to cover it even more so when it's cold because people can no longer crash in a park.

In fact, last Saturday morning after the snowstorm in Baltimore a 61-year-old homeless woman was found dead behind a building in downtown Baltimore. She suffered a cerebral hemorrhage but her body was frozen. And this is happening in our streets and this is happening amidst, again, the wealth and affluence of this great country.

VOLUNTEER RESPONSE

Another very moving experience which happened to me this past week took place after work one day. In response to the freezing conditions and the fact that most of the existing shelters in Baltimore were full, a colleague of mine who operates a soup kitchen out of a church convinced her congregation to allow her to open

the basement of that church to house people. In the first hour 20 people came and by day's end there were 60 people in the basement of this church.

I work with runaway youth and I work with homeless young people. It's a targeted population. My experience that night was feeling like it was an accident ready to happen, that people were opening up their hearts to this population and offering what they could, but it was so isolated and devoid of support from government that it really was the combination of the institutionalized mentally ill, unemployed, untrained, substance abusers—I looked at some of these adult men, looked in their eyes, and knew that they were completely high on drugs or alcohol. It was kind of frightening if you thought about what could happen in the course of that night.

I turned to Esther who was operating it and said, "God bless you for opening this place, but do you realize what we're doing here?" It was staffed by volunteers, not people who were really trained to work to respond to the needs of this population. It scared me, and I have a background of 12 years experience.

A lot of things are happening in Baltimore, but I want to emphasize to this subcommittee today and to the assemblage here that what is happening in Baltimore and in central Maryland is largely at the impetus of the private voluntary sector.

There are some 18 shelters operating in central Maryland, Baltimore and the five surrounding counties, and 79 percent of the funding comes from the private sector. This is money that's sought—on a daily basis from churches, community groups, and private foundations. Clearly Government has not yet begun to pay its share of the cost of caring for its most indigent and needy populations at this time.

Mayor Flynn talked about the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's health care for the homeless. Baltimore is fortunate enough to have a project site also, one of 18 sites around the country. We have $400,000 a year coming in to provide health care to the homeless. But again, that's private money that's offering assistance to a population that clearly ought to have access to services that are provided by government.

The Salvation Army here recently outfitted a van to go out into the streets of Baltimore in the evenings and feed homeless people who may not be coming into shelters.

A recent article in the Baltimore Sun talked about 70,000 housing units in Baltimore that are in substandard condition, 40,000 families on welfare rolls, the waiting list for public housing in Baltimore is 40,000 families, and we have 5,600 boarded-up houses. Baltimore has a national reputation for experiencing a renaissance, an urban revitalization, but the poor in that city are suffering and suffering tremendously. Yet the opportunities are there. When you have 5,600 boarded-up houses and you've got people dying in the streets, the answer is clear; we need to train people to rehab houses to offer them to the families that are without houses. Maybe it's a little simplistic, but it seems the shortest distance between two points is a straight line. We should use abandoned houses to house homeless people.

The mayors talked a lot about the causal factors and I won't go into that except to say as a provider—I agree. As regards the deinstitutionalized, and our failure to provide adequate community support; we didn't close the hospitals. If we closed the hospitals and moved the money that's spent to maintain those institutions and pay the doctors' salaries and moved those resources into the community, we would have the money to care for the mentally ill who are living back in the communities.

I operate a runaway youth program. For the last 12 years we've had benefit of Federal assistance through the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, title III of the Delinquency Prevention Act. I think that's an example of the kind of the assistance that could be afforded to institutions providing assistance to the homeless.

Now, 12 years ago my organization operated on about $100,000 a year and when we first got our Federal grant it was for $60,000. It represented 60 percent of our budget. And 12 years later, our operating budget is about $½ million and our Federal grant is down to 20 percent of the share of that but we are able to, as Mayor Riley said, leverage additional support. The Federal dollars legitimized what we are doing. It allowed us to begin us to attract private money to support our operation. That in turn opened the eyes of the State about what we were doing and they said, "Well, if the Feds are willing to support you and you're able to get this private support, maybe we should kick some money in." And ultimately even the city of Baltimore has been providing assistance, much needed assistance for which we are very grateful.

PROBLEMS WITH FEMA

My experiences with FEMA and with the other Government programs is troubling because it's a faucet that's turned on and off and you can't close those beds down. We are in a struggle on an annual basis about beds which are supported by FEMA for 9 months of the year and then the other 3 months they aren't there or there's late startup or the money doesn't come down quickly enough, we're talking about people's lives here. We're talking about the ability to offer people, as Valerie was saying, a safe place, in the absence of having a place to call home, some place where they can rest and regroup with help available.

The Salvation Army or Travelers' Aid or one of the sister shelters in Baltimore find that they've got some of the money some of the time, but there's no stability in operating facilities for the homeless and we dearly need that. I hope this august body will see fit to support our effort.

I thank you for the opportunity to talk to you today.

[Annual survey of shelter providers in central Maryland follows:]

GREATER BALTIMORE SHELTER NETWORK, INC.

ANNUAL SURVEY OF SHELTER PROVIDERS

IN CENTRAL MARYLAND

FISCAL YEAR 1986

2015 St. Paul Street
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21218
(301) 625-0314

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The idea for the annual publication of a comprehensive survey instrument was developed by the Greater Baltimore Shelter Network's Service Development Committee to monitor the evershifting scope of the problem of homelessness. No easy task considering the transient nature of this population, the number of unrelated agencies involved, the limitations of overworked staff and volunteers, and the wealth of misinformation already published and accepted by many as fact. It is the objective of the Network to keep an accurate and timely record of facts, as reported by those who work with the homeless on a daily basis. As a result, it should be clear, to our public officials and policy makers as well as the general public, what steps must be taken to adequately serve those already homeless, and prevent their ranks from growing in the future.

The Greater Baltimore Shelter Network acknowledges the following committee members for the development of the survey instrument and the preparation of the Annual Survey of Shelter and Service Providers in Central Maryland:

GRACE FENDLAY

NANCY FRIEDMAN

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We would like to thank the following shelter providers for their response to our survey. Without their patient cooperation this document would not have been possible:

Baltimore City

AMERICAN RESCUE WORKERS
ANTIOCH COMMUNITY
BALTIMORE AMERICAN INDIAN CENTER
CHRISTOPHER PLACE
FELLOWSHIP OF LIGHTS
HOUSE OF THE HOLY REDEEMER
HOUSE OF RUTH
LUMINA HOUSE
MARIAN HOUSE
MY SISTER'S PLACE
NOAH'S ARK
PRISONERS AID
PROJECT PLASE
SALVATION ARMY
UNITED BRETHREN FOR CHRIST
WOMEN'S HOUSING COALITION
YWCA

Central Maryland

CARROLL CO. HOMELESS WOMEN'S SHELTER
CITIZENS AGAINST SPOUSAL ASSAULT
COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY--HOWARD CO.
DSS--ANNE ARUNDEL CO.
DSS--BALTIMORE CO.
DSS--HARFORD CO.
FAMILY CRISIS CENTER OF DUNDALK
FORWARD STEP
GRASSROOTS
HARTLEY HOUSE
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
TRAVELERS AID SOCIETY
YWCA--BALTIMORE CO.

INTRODUCTION

Central Maryland is experiencing a tide of homelessness which has already inundated the services, both public and private, which are available to meet the emergent needs of our citizenry. We are witnessing the effects of public policies and social upheavals (ie. dispersal of family members, changing family structure, etc.) which result in the loss of home and stability for many of our neighbors - women and men, old and young, black and white. Families are living as urban nomads, wandering from one inadequate housing situation to another in distress and dispair. Communities of the homeless are established under our bridges, with only the warmth of a campfire to reduce the sting of winter. Others sleep on our park benches in perpetual fear of rain and the unkind stranger.

These disastrous conditions receive increasing attention in the media, but meet with the most limited responses from those institutions with the resources to resolve them. Massachusetts has spent $9 million dollars over the past year to relocate homeless families into permanent housing, while also sheltering the homeless at a cost of $19 million. (There are an estimated 10,000 homeless persons in Massachusetts.) The New York City government spends $100 million each year to shelter the homeless and receives a like amount from the state government, while having recently appropriated $100 million to develop low income housing. These efforts are targeted at a homeless population variously estimated between 25,000 and 60,000 persons. The City of Philadelphia provides 5000 emergency shelter beds for homeless persons, while Seattle funds 1500 beds. Although these levels of service are recognized as inadequate, the collective response of Maryland's local jurisdictions and state government has been virtually insignificant. The entire state of Maryland spends less than $2 million on programs for their homeless (even portions of that money have federal origin), while Baltimore City, with a homeless population estimated at 20,000, provides less than $100,000 for emergency food and shelter.# (see Tables 1 and 5).

The Greater Baltimore Shelter Network has been working to develop short and long range solutions to the problems of homelessness since 1981. During these five years, Network members have been acutely aware of the need to quantify and validate the extent of the problem. Since its inception, the Network has been involved in a variety of initiatives to measure the scope of the problem.

#National Coalition for the Homeless, Washington, D.C., 1986

In January 1982, the Network undertook its first annual survey of shelter providers. Efforts since that time have been geared toward standardizing the statistical reporting methods of those agencies providing emergency shelter. While this goal may appear readily obtainable, the realities of providing this emergency service often preclude the collection of data in a uniform and accurate fashion.

This document is intended as a tool for planning, developing and coordinating services to homeless persons in Central Maryland. It includes the following information:

--a description of persons seeking shelter in Central Maryland (see Table 2),
--a discussion of causal factors of homelessness,
--an identification of needs for which there are no services or inadequate services,
--a delineation of funding sources supporting emergency services,
--a discussion of immediate and long term solutions.

The Annual Survey of Shelter Providers in Central Maryland is based on statistical surveys collected from emergency and transitional shelters, and agencies which secure shelter through the purchase of bedspace in area motels, rooming houses, shelters, etc. The latter group of providers includes community based, nonprofit organizations and local Departments of Social Services (see Table 2).

The basic needs of the citizens of Maryland, especially shelter and food, have not represented public policy priorities in the past. It is the intent of the Greater Baltimore Shelter Network to facilitate an examination of homelessness in the state and to participate in the development of public policies and private initiatives which will both serve the homeless and ultimately prevent homelessness.

THE MAGNITUDE OF THE PROBLEM

A study commissioned by the Maryland Department of Human Resources and released in August 1986 estimates that on any given night, 2900 persons are homeless in Maryland, with 1730 of these in Central Maryland. Only 1000 of these persons (623 in Central Maryland) are able to obtain emergency shelter, suggesting that large numbers of people are literally sleeping in streets and abandoned buildings. This study did not attempt to determine the total number of persons in Maryland who would experience homelessness during a given year, but the Greater Baltimore Shelter Network's survey indicated that in Central Maryland, of the 44,184 requests for shelter during Fiscal Year 1986, only 17,580 could be answered; 26,604, (over 60%) were refused due to limited resources (see Table 4).*

The figures noted above indicate that the needs of the homeless in Maryland are not being met, even with respect to the most basic, i.e. emergency shelter; however, emergency shelter should not be the primary focus of an analysis of homelessness. More significant is the state of housing, for it is important to remember that homelessness is fundamentally the absence of a home, which emergency shelter is assuredly not.

-In 1984 The Baltimore Sun reported that 57,912 households in Baltimore need, but cannot obtain, subsidized housing. (The Sun, 11/9/84. p.D1)

-33% of all single adult Baltimore City residents live in poverty; in 1984 the median monthly rent for a single room in Baltimore was $175, or 139% of the Maryland welfare payment to a single disabled person. (Bird, Ray, "Homelessness and the Need for Housing for Low-Income Single Adults in Baltimore", Baltimore City Department of Planning, May, 1984, no pagination)

-From 1975 to 1983 rooming units licensed by the City of Baltimore declined by 13%. (Ibid)

-The Maryland Housing Policy Commission estimated that by 1990 the State of Maryland will have a shortage of 86,000 units for households earning under $20,000 per year. (Where Go You Go from Nowhere, Maryland Department of Human Resources, August, 1986, p.42)

-The 1980 census concluded that 250,000 Marylanders spent more than 30% of their income on housing. (Ibid., p.26)

-More than 30% of existing housing units in Baltimore have structural deficiencies (the largest percentage for any U.S. city). (Nugent, Tom, Inside Baltimore, January, 1985, p.3)

*These figures do not include three missions in Baltimore City which house up to 13 women and 323 men each night.

The swelling ranks of the homeless are a clear indication that Maryland is in the midst of a housing crisis which can only be resolved by coordinated activity of the public and private sectors on a massive scale. In order to meet the needs for emergency shelter and to build a future which provides decent housing to all of our citizens, we must examine the conditions which have led to our current housing crisis and then formulate and implement measures in a comprehensive fashion.

CAUSES OF HOMELESSNESS

The housing crisis in Maryland and the homelessness which it produces may be said to have four underlying causes: the forces which produce a shortage of low-income housing; inadequate incomes for increasingly large numbers of Maryland residents; the phenomenon of deinstitutionalization, and the dearth of services for the disabled; and the lack of housing alternatives for non-traditional families. We shall examine each of these in turn.

The Shortage of Low-Income Housing: Housing is produced via complex interrelationships between public and private forces. As a commodity, the private sector produces housing units in an effort to generate profit. Low-income housing is less profitable than housing for other socio-economic groups, and is consequently produced with much less frequency. As the forces of the market tend not to produce low-income housing, the need for this commodity is met by the private, non-profit sector and by the public sector, which may directly produce this commodity or encourage its development by means of tax incentives and subsidies.

The federal commitment to low-income housing has declined since 1978, with respect to both direct production and subsidization; however the federal commitment has never been especially large. In fact, the yearly subsidy provided for homeownership via tax deductions equals the total federal spending for low-income housing since World War II. But, as Federal support has declined, state and local support has not increased concomitantly, thus exacerbating an already troubled situation. The 1986 legislative session in Annapolis saw the adoption of a number of significant aspects of the Governor's Housing Initiative, but levels of funding were far beneath documented needs.

Housing policies of local governments have in many cases further worsened the neglect which characterizes housing for the poor. Some jurisdictions have encouraged gentrification which displaces poor residents, without developing mechanisms to produce housing for those displaced. Federal funds available to house the poor are frequently directed to projects which produce housing and amenities (expensive condominiums and shopping areas) for those less in need (cf. Inside Baltimore, vol. 1, no. 2, December 1984).

The unwillingness of local governments to act is often as hareful as the programs and policies which they institute. The loss of nearly all of the single room occupancy facilities in

Baltimore and the displacement and homelessness which resulted (as documented by the Baltimore City Department of Planning in a 1984 study) could have been prevented through creative and proactive planning. The further displacement caused by unchecked landbanking and condominium conversion seems also to meet with no response. Meanwhile, our housing stock deteriorates and our shelters overflow with those unable to locate a home.

Inadequate Incomes: Increasingly large numbers of Maryland residents are receiving incomes which force them to choose between shelter or food, or which eliminate the possibility of shelter altogether. Between 1970 and 1980, of the 277 neighborhoods which exist in Baltimore (as designated by the Johns Hopkins University Center for Metropolitan Planning and Research), 210 or 76% experienced increases in the percentage of their residents living below the poverty line, and of the City's 117 predominantly black neighborhoods, an astounding 90% showed increases in poverty. This phenomenon can be attributed to the increasing unemployment which has accompanied an absolute loss of jobs, a decrease in the percentage of employment in relatively well-paid fields such as manufacturing (between 1950 and 1983 Baltimore lost 82,000, or 60% of its manufacturing jobs), and the failure of public assistance grant levels to meet the needs of eligible recipients.

400,000 Marylanders live in poverty. The benefit levels of public assistance programs meant to meet the needs of those who are unable to financially provide for themselves maintain this poverty. When combined with food stamps, Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) provides only 78% of the state's Standard of Need, while General Public Assistance (GPA) provides a disabled individual with only 58% of the Standard of Need. These income levels, when coupled with the drastic shortages of low-income housing, condemn public assistance recipients to inadequate, overcrowded, or no housing.

The Neighborhood Progress Administration of Baltimore City released in June 1986 an analysis of rent surveys in Baltimore City and the surrounding metropolitan area. Average advertised contract rents in April 1986 were $311 per month for a one bedroom apartment, $368 per month for a two bedroom apartment, and $438 per month for a three bedroom apartment in Baltimore City. (The figures for the Baltimore suburbs are generally somewhat higher.) A family with one wage earner paid at the minimum wage would spend 56% of its gross income for an average one bedroom unit and 71% of its gross income for a three bedroom unit. (A household is ordinarily expected to utilize 30% of its income for housing costs.)

The situation of a family receiving AFDC is even more desperate. A family of three would need to expend 90% of its income for housing in order to secure a one bedroom apartment, and 107% of its income for a two bedroom apartment - and energy costs are not included in this calculation. Housing is simply unavailable for low-income persons, and their homelessness is thus readily explicable.

This population is comprised of the most vulnerable members of society. Approximately 60% of AFDC recipients are children

and an additional 10% are their disabled parents. Recipients of GPA must be certified by a health care professional as incapacitated and thus unable to work. By funding benefits at such low levels, we are condemning these persons to a tenuous existence which is frequently characterized by periods of homelessness.

A phenomenon which is noticeable nationwide is the increase in homelessness among those who have not in the past been dependent upon public assistance benefits. These "new homeless" are generally described as those whose underemployment or unemployment, when taken with the increasing costs of housing, prohibits the ability to afford permanent housing. Maryland is not immune to this phenomenon, for despite the much heralded economic recovery of the past several years, our public and private social service agencies are receiving larger volumes of requests for shelter and income assistance from persons with histories of employment and self-sufficiency.

*Between 1978 and 1985, 23,800 jobs were lost in the two industries employing the largest portion of Maryland's skilled manufacturing labor force: primary and fabricated metals and apparel/textiles. In 1970 these two industries accounted for 20.63% of the state's total manufacturing employment; by 1985 that figure had dropped to 16.68%. As these two industries were identified by Maryland's Department of Employment and Training as the "major declining manufacturing industries" in the state, it would seem that there is little hope for their future.

Though Maryland has seen a substantial increase in employment in recent years, 38.4% of these new jobs have been in the service and trade industries. This has proven to be a mixed blessing, for a number of reasons. Although these jobs are open to a wide variety of applicants, requiring little previous experience or costly training, most pay minimum wage and offer few, if any, health or retirement benefits. It is virtually impossible for an individual making minimum wage to afford rent, heat, food, and other living expenses. Obviously, such an income would make supporting a family impossible, yet many skilled manufacturing workers have found themselves forced to compete for such positions as manufacturing jobs are lost. Furthermore, many of these jobs are only seasonal, opening during holidays and the summer months and closing for the rest of the year. There is also a great deal of competition in these industries from young workers, making it difficult for an older worker to re-enter the job market.

There are currently job-readiness programs available to low-income and homeless individuals, but these programs are limited in scope and resources, due to the scarcity of funds. Agencies currently operating such programs in Central Maryland include:

The Baltimore City Office of Manpower Services
Barnabas House
Genesis Jobs

*"Employment and Unemployment Watch 1970-1985 Annual Averages," June 1986, Maryland Department of Employment and Training, Research and Analysis Division, Baltimore, Maryland.

The House of the Holy Redeemer
Jubilee Jobs
Maryland Department of Employment and Training
Marian House
Travelers Aid Society
Wenceslaus House

The Mentally Ill and the Disabled: At present, the Central Maryland area has no emergency shelter for people who are physically disabled. Almost all shelters are contained in older buildings (converted private homes, nursing homes, and schools) which lack the accomodations necessary to serve the handicapped, (ramps, wider doorways, railings, etc.) and modifications are expensive and not feasible for many of these structures. Additionally, the piecemeal fashion in which many shelters are funded does not allow for such modifications, nor for sufficient staff to provide assistance with daily tasks, i.e. transportation, access to health care, showers, and meals.

In order to shelter the physically disabled, most agencies must resort to purchasing bednights in area motels which have rooms on the first floor. This is, however, a costly and temporary means of dealing with the problem.

From February to July of 1986, Maryland Citizens for Housing for the Disabled (MCHD) operated a shelter for the physically handicapped or mobility impaired. MCHD sheltered people in the first floor of an area motel and provided meals, case management, and some transportation. During this period, 52 handicapped persons were sheltered by MCHD, three persons were assisted with rent subsidies, 19 people were turned away due to lack of resources, and 10 people were turned away due to ineligibility (existing shelters would suffice).

The lack of handicapped-accessable shelter is exacerbated by the dearth of accessable housing. Such facilities generally have a two to three year waiting list and are usually targeted for the elderly, with minimum age restrictions and programs designed for senior citizens, rather than young handicapped persons.

A 1986 handicapped housing list compiled by MCHD names 125 accessible apartment complexes in the Baltimore metropolitan area (including Prince Georges County). Of these, 84 based rent on the person's income (usually 30%). For those without publicly subsidized rent, the average cost of an apartment is $385.40. For most people who are handicapped and homeless, this amount of money is beyond their means--the most common disability benefit is SSI at only $340.00 per month.

The mentally ill are another group needing special assistance with emergency shelter. Many homeless mental patients have been part of the "revolving door" syndrome, i.e., those who follow a pattern of moving from unstable living situations, to the street, to a mental or penal institution, back to the street, etc, in a continuing cycle. These individuals tend to have little or no family support. And, in addition to lacking some

Table 1: Comparing Baltimore's commitment with other cities.

City	Avg. per Capita Income 1981*	Population 1980*	Per Capita Ranking 1981*	Estimated number of Homeless**	FY 86 Local Govt. Expenditures for Emerg. Food & Shelter**
Baltimore	$7,076	787,000	10th	20,000	$97,322.
Boston	7,783	563,000	20th	6,000-9,000	1.4 million
Chicago	8,333	3,005,000	2nd	25,000	2.5 million
New York	8,737	7,072,000	1st	60,000	81.0 million
Philadelphia	7,109	1,688,000	4th	15,000	13.0 million
Seattle	11,006	494,000	23rd	3,000	1.4 million

* Source: Statistical Abstract of the U.S.

** Source: National Coalition for the Homeless

Table 2: Profile of Homeless Population Served, by Percent

	Age						Sex			Race			
Jurisdiction	4-	5-19	20-34	35-39	40+	?*	M	F	?*	B	W	O	?*
Baltimore City	3	4	37	18	27	12	76	17	8	59	28	3	10
Central Maryland	14	17	18	11	5	36	22	16	38	10	39	2	49

*Unspecified

Note: Discrepancies between the percentage of youth served in Baltimore city and that of Central Maryland reflects the lack of shelter beds available to adult single men in Central Maryland jurisdictions.

Senator CRANSTON. Thank you very, very much.

I would like to ask you both this question, starting with you, Valerie. Did some particular incident or event cause you to get involved in the needs of the homeless and the hungry or what brought you to this involvement?

Ms. HARPER. I have been, since 1977, part of the Advisory Council of The Hunger Project, when that organization first was born in the city of San Francisco. It's now global—Bombay and all over the world and in Washington. This is an organization that took the point of view—took the initiative of looking into the area of hunger. Well, 28 people were starving a minute, 24 of them under 5 years of age.

Senator CRANSTON. How did you happen to get involved in that?

Ms. HARPER. I, myself?

Senator CRANSTON. Yes.

Ms. HARPER. I found out about The Hunger Project when it was just being created. I was on the board of another organization and there was a group of people saying that they were going—John Denver was one of them—were going to take responsibility personally, along with others, to end hunger.

PROVIDE FOOD FOR 23,000 PEOPLE A WEEK

To just move along with this, the concept that we are all responsible was what was borne in me through The Hunger Project. Out of that I created a group with Dennis Weaver called Love is Feeding Everyone, [LIFE]. We started out feeding 100 people in east Los Angeles and the point was that we would get food that was being discarded by supermarkets and get it directly into the community and that the community people—it's a labor-intensive situation but that's what it needs to be—were feeding themselves and their neighbors. We now provide food for 23,000 a week because a Thanksgiving and Christmas turkey doesn't make it. It needs to be ongoing.

Through that organization I met Mitch Snyder and Carol Finley because they were operating in a similar way. Though not directly food, food is part of the problem of the homeless and really, Senator Cranston, it was looking at the newspaper, seeing Santa Monica where I run—I know you also are a runner—and seeing more and more people out there and more and more people in need and more women and kids. So the more you see the need, the more you feel. The question is, what can I do? And each of us has to sit with that, whether we're a homemaker, a Senator, or whatever, working at any age, what can I do about alleviating hunger, about doing something about the homeless issue?

And I think that you—I start living from that point of view, so it's no skin off my acting career or anything else I'm doing, or my relationship, or my home or seeing my family. It becomes part of my life and opportunities to contribute keep coming up. I again want to thank you for affording me this opportunity.

I wanted to say one other thing. I don't know if I was really clear on it and Ross said it again. A person is going to have a great deal of difficulty taking themselves as a valued part of society and moving up out of their condition if they don't have a proper envi-

ronment, and the center that you and I have both seen, Senator, that is not an end-all. There's a stage after that. Mitch was saying that the heating and air ducts in the vent system cost about $2 million. It's an enormous structure and it can house 1,100 people. So that is really a minor expenditure in comparison to what our GNP is, what our defense budget is, and you all are much more conversant with that than I am, but I say that this is such well-spent money. Those people back in life, and a full half of them will be back in life participating as taxpayers. I mean, absolutely, human decency dictates it, but also economic expediency, to bring people back into being functioning parts of society.

You asked earlier one of the mayors about how many veterans. It is my understanding that in Los Angeles over a third of the men on the street are not just vets, but Vietnam vets. So maybe the half that you were speaking of are the veterans who are older veterans, but when you think that a third of those fellows that were there fighting that war—assisting them to return to civilian life is just what we should do.

I know we can do it and we just have to do it quickly. So I got involved through my hunger activism and will continue to be involved until we win it.

Senator CRANSTON. Thank you very much. It's great you got involved.

Ross, was there any particular experience or event or incident that got your interest and caused you to become involved?

Mr. POLOGE. Well, it clearly was a part of my growing up—social responsibility, social consciousness. I guess it just seems so obvious to me to get involved. My written testimony is the annual survey of the Greater Baltimore Shelter Network. When we realize that over the last 4 years the numbers of people served in central Maryland has increased 56 percent and the numbers who have had to be turned away because of inadequate space is up around 160 percent over 4 years, it just seems that you can't turn your back on it any longer.

I want to repeat, there are a lot of private voluntary efforts involved in central Maryland and probably in communities throughout the country in response to the problems of the homeless, and we come here now today to say the Federal Government needs to say this is a priority action and set the example for other levels of government for getting involved.

Senator CRANSTON. We've heard about the people who are mentally ill who inhabit the grates or the homeless refugees. We've heard that many of them are veterans. But it's my impression there isn't really a stereotype; that people can come from all backgrounds.

I had a rather interesting experience when I went with Mitch Snyder to the shelter here recently. There was a room of 20 or 30 people lying on cots, some asleep, some just staring at the ceiling, some reading, some watching television. They all knew Mitch and he said, "Hi," and they all said hello to him. He said, "This is Senator Cranston who's come with me to see what's going on here." And one middle-aged man got up off a cot and came over and shook my hand and said, "Didn't you write a book some years ago

vital, independent skills, they may be easily identified and consequently victimized by others on the street.

Hospital stays limited by cost-containment regulations, inadequate discharge planning procedures, and insufficient supportive residential alternatives result in patients leaving acute care facilities, both medical and psychiatric, only to join the ranks of the homeless.

A person released from a medical or psychiatric facility may have medication or aftercare requirements, which, if neglected, allow old symptoms to reappear, or new ones to develop. The situation can result in the person ultimately returning to an inpatient facility, but only until they are judged stable enough to return to the streets.

Again, there are few emergency shelters which have the staff and the resources to deal with the special needs of these individuals. Many of these people are likely to have trouble adhering to the rules of the shelter, their behavior being judged problematic, even disruptive. This may lead to expulsion from the shelter, and tragically, to the shelter's refusal to serve this population in the future. A result of this "sorting out" process may inevitably lead to those who most desperately need our help being forced to stay at missions, other shelters which provide beds, but few other services, or not being served at all (see Tables 1 and 6).

Obtaining psychiatric services for the homeless is further complicated by their reliance upon emergency services, especially hospital emergency rooms, where adequate psychiatric attention is often unavailable; those deemed not ill enough to be hospitalized are turned out into the street.

The Non-Traditional Homeless: Physically handicapped and mentally ill individuals are not the only ones who have trouble fitting into the emergency shelter circuit. Some homeless, including those who were recently incarcerated, fathers with children, teenagers, and intact families, also have trouble finding shelter. Most shelters are designed to serve a specific population and often some of these groups are omitted. For example, there are only two emergency shelters in the Baltimore area which are specifically for homeless or runaway teenagers, aged 12 to 17. Those over 17 must fend for themselves in shelters primarily serving adults. This vulnerable population needs more than most emergency shelters can provide in the way of guidance and counseling.

Housing options beyond shelter are also particularly difficult for these special groups. It is unlikely that a homeless 18 year old has the education, employment, or support systems to locate, secure, and maintain an apartment in the average Baltimore neighborhood. This necessitates room-sharing situations and other equally problematic alternatives.

The ex-offender similarly suffers from a lack of resources for shelter and employment. Very little post-release planning is provided by the staff of penal institutions and no special funds are available to enable this underserved group to obtain living quarters, transportation, training, or employment.

Finally, as the composition of families change, zoning

regulations and antiquated buildings are often barriers to current housing needs. Restrictions on the number of unrelated adults who may occupy a residence and the preference of financial institutions to build free standing, single-family dwellings are anachronisms which do not facilitate housing non-traditional families. Our shelters will not be functional transitional housing until affordable permanant housing alternatives are available.

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE RESOURCES CURRENTLY AVAILABLE

I. Public Housing Resources

1. Public Housing is publicly owned and administered housing for which a low-income tenant pays 30% of his or her income.

2. Congregate Housing involves housing 4-15 people in a group setting with cooperative meals and tasks. Other supportive services require zoning and license from Health Department. Residents must be financially eligible.

3. Sheltered Housing involves 1 to 3 people in a group or family setting. Case management by Department of Aging or Social Services is involved and the resident must be financially eligible.

4. Section 8 and Voucher Programs are rent subsidy programs for low income persons.

5. Low Income Housing Initiative is state legislation designed to assist with housing rehabilitation, repair, and construction loans, weatherization, and additional subsidies for improving health and safety, indoor plumbing, lead point abatement, and increased housing support for emergency shelters, transitional housing and sheltered housing.

6. Homesharing involves linking those who need apartment/houses with those who need roommates/housemates. Requires an intake process and is a voluntary program.

II. Private Shelter Resources

1. Private Agencies which pay for shelters, bednights motels and/or provide assistance in locating housing.

A. Jewish Family Services
B. Lutheran Social Services
C. Travelers Aid Society
D. Maryland Family and Children's Services

Emergency Shelters

American Rescue Workers
Antioch Community
Baltimore American Indian Center
Baltimore Rescue Mission
Christopher Place
Citizens Against Spousal Assault
Family Crisis Center of Dundalk
Fellowship of Lights
Forward Step (Harford Co.)
Frederick Union Rescue Mission (Frederick Co.)
Grassroots Crisis Intervention
Hartley House (Frederick Co.)
Helping-Up Mission
Homeless Women's Shelter (Carroll Co.)
House of Ruth
Karis Hospice
My Sister's Place
Prisoners Aid
Project PLASE
Salvation Army
United Bretheren for Christ
YWCA Corner House (Balt. City)
YWCA Corner House (Balt. Co.)

Transitional Housing

Barnabas House
House of the Holy Redeemer
Lumina House
Marian House
Noah's Ark
Women's Housing Coalition

III. Other Organizations

A. Baltimore Homeless Peoples' Union is a local affiliate of a national organizing effort on behalf of the homeless and formerly homeless which works toward the empowerment of the homeless and permanent solutions to housing problems.

B. Epiphany House is a private, low income housing alternative for the elderly, organized and operated by a group of churches from the Govans community in Baltimore City.

C. Greater Baltimore Shelter Newtork is a non-profit advocacy organization for homeless persons and shelter providers. It is a volunteer organization, promoting legal and legislative change, resource

development, service development, public education/ information and fundraising.

D. Health Care for the Homeless provides free medical services to the homeless of Baltimore City, including on site, non-emergency treatment and referrals to other clinics for specialized services. Operates walk-in clinics at Christopher Place and My Sister's Place.

D. Jubilee Housing rents 10 rehabilitated houses to low-income persons.

E. Neighborhood Housing Service provides homeownership assistance (including financing and counseling) to Irvington Govans residents.

F. Neighborhood Rental Service constructs, manages, and owns rental properties for low-income persons in the Patterson Park area. Also provided are construction and management assistance to non-profit agencies.

G. Maryland Citizens for Housing for the Disabled (MCHD) -- an advocacy group for physically disabled individuals oriented toward advocacy for affordable, handicapped accessible housing. (Targeted to open handicapped accessible shelter in Spring, 1987.)

H. People's Homesteading Group-- a grassroots organization which uses "sweat equity" and teamwork to renovate abandoned houses and buy them from the city, thereby assisting low income families to develop their own housing.

I. Project Shelter is a non-profit volunteer committee involved in fundraising and related efforts on behalf of shelter and service providers in Central Maryland.

J. St. Ambrose Center provides counseling for low income home buyers and home owners: it also provides advice and assistance regarding home improvements and foreclosures. Funding is derived from Associated Catholic Charities.

CONCLUSION

The survey whose results are documented in the preceding text is meant to provoke a number of responses. The general public is invited to view with alarm the numbers of their friends and relatives who have no place to call home - 44,184 requests for emergency shelter were received by helping agencies in 1986. Organizations within the private sector who respond to the needs of the homeless should take pride in the generosity of their endeavors, but be dismayed that so many of those who seek assistance must be turned away because of a dearth of resources - 26,604 requests for shelter were denied in Central Maryland in 1986. Our public officials must note the crisis which overwhelms public and private efforts to assure that the most vulnerable members of our society be afforded that basic necessity, a home.

The Maryland Department of Human Resources commissioned a study of homelessness which was carried out by the Health and Welfare Council of Central Maryland in 1985. Published in August 1986 as Where Do You Go From Nowhere, and accompanied by recommendations for state action developed by the Governor's Advisory Board on the Shelter, Nutrition, and Service Program for Homeless Persons, this comprehensive view of homelessness concluded that 28,000 homeless persons were served by shelters in Maryland in 1985, and that only approximately one-third of those in need of shelter received this service on any given night. The Greater Baltimore Shelter Network's survey clearly indicated that little progress is being made in more adequately meeting the needs of the homeless, and that the fundamental causes of homelessness - the marginalization of increasingly large segments of our society - are hardly being addressed.

The Governor's Advisory Board proposed twelve key recommendations for action with respect to homelessness (see page three of Homelessness: Recommendations for State Action). The Greater Baltimore Shelter Network supports these, but we are particularly concerned with the need to prevent homelessness rather than to institutionalize it. Consequently, while efforts continue to provide emergency shelter to those in need of this service - and current levels of support by the public sector for such endeavors are inadequate, suggesting that the Governor's Advisory Board's recommendation of an increase in funding of $3.5 million dollars for emergency shelter and transitional housing be mandated - increasing attention must be paid to the more fundamental issues of housing, employment, income maintenance and services to the disabled. Decent, affordable housing for all of our citizens must become a public policy priority. A job at a living wage must be made available to those who so desperately wish to become self-sufficient. In an affluent society, those who cannot work should be assisted in living with the dignity to which they are entitled. And our friends and relatives who are disabled must be guaranteed access to the support through which they can achieve the fullest measure of independence.

The ultimate success of the shelter community is its own abolition. The Greater Baltimore Shelter Network urges the citizens of Maryland to join with its members in working toward that goal.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

REQUESTS FOR SHELTER--The number of individual requests received by shelters during the year. This number equals the total individuals served plus the total turned away. It includes some double counting of individuals, but does not include three missions in Baltimore City, serving up to 13 women and 320 men per night. This figure is not meant to represent an accurate census of Central Maryland's homeless population. It is, however, a reliable barometer of shelter use and an indirect illustration of the staggering need.

EMERGENCY SHELTER--Usually defined as having a maximum length of stay under eight weeks, with limited degrees of individual attention, depending on the shelter. Purpose is to provide short term shelter to persons in times of crisis.

TRANSITIONAL SHELTER--With a generally longer length of stay (up to 2 years in some shelters), most shelters in this category provide a more individual and comprehensive program of support for their clients, including counseling, job and education assistance, advocacy, etc. Purpose is to act as a transition from a crisis situation to a stable living situation.

CENTRAL MARYLAND--Within the tables, refers to Anne Arundel, Carroll, Baltimore, Howard, Harford, and Frederick Counties.

MISSION--Emergency shelter providing basic services with a mandatory religious component, and an indefinite length of stay.

Table 3: Requests for Shelter, FY 1986--Breakdown by Shelter

Responding Providers#	Individuals Served	Individuals Turned Away	Total Requests for Shelter
Baltimore City			
AMERICAN RESCUE WORKERS	5475	700	6175
ANTIOCH COMMUNITY	748	1865	2613
BALT. AMERICAN INDIAN CNTR	25	4	29
BARNABAS HOUSE	245	600	845
CHRISTOPHER PLACE	1990	10950	12940
FELLOWSHIP OF LIGHTS	350	100	450
HOUSE OF THE HOLY REDEEMER	39	34	73
HOUSE OF RUTH	439	1587	2026
LUMINA HOUSE	76	30	106
MARIAN HOUSE	52	65	117
MY SISTER'S PLACE	66	70	136
NOAH'S ARK	52	10	62
PRISONERS AID	622	20	642
PROJECT PLASE	375	551	926
SALVATION ARMY	968	5040	6008
TRAVELERS AID SOCIETY	67	0	67
UNITED BRETHREN FOR CHRIST	9	400	409
WOMEN'S HOUSING COALITION	52	200	252
YWCA CORNER HOUSE, CITY	953	2244	3197
Central Maryland			
FAMILY CRISIS CNTR, DUNDALK	513	236	749
YWCA CORNER HOUSE, BALT. CO	276	226	502
YWCA BATTERED SPOUSE PRGM	224	12	236
HOMELESS WOMEN'S SHELTER	850	14	864
HARTLEY HOUSE	114	55	169
FORWARD STEP	185	80	265
CTZNS AGAINST SPOUSAL ASSLT	110	26	136
GRASSROOTS	435	271	706
DSS BALTIMORE CO	510	0	510
DSS HARFORD CO	1240	559	1799
DSS ANNE ARUNDEL CO	46	600	646
COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY	24	5	29
Totals	17130	26554	43684

#Includes only those shelters that returned surveys.

Table 4: Total Requests for Shelter in Central Maryland, FY 1986

	EMERGENCY SHELTER		
Jurisdiction	Individuals Served	Individuals Turned Away	Total Requests# for shelter
Baltimore City	34% 12,603	66% 24,520	37,123
Central Maryland	70% 4977	30% 2084	7061
Grand Total	40% 17,580	60% 26,604	44,184

#See "Glossary of Terms"

Note: Does not include three missions in Baltimore City serving up to 336 persons a night.

Note: Some information included in this table was gathered via phone interviews with shelters not responding to written survey, hence the deviation from Table 3.

Table 5: Origins of Shelter Funding, by Percent FY 1986

Sources	Baltimore City	Central Maryland
PRIVATE SECTOR	79	69
PUBLIC SECTOR	21	31
Federal	4	6
State	16	19
Local	1	6

Breakdown of Available Resources

Public Sector

STATE
M.B. 1415 Funds
Women Services
Juvenile Services
Marriage License Fees

FEDERAL
FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Administration)
Community Development Block Grant

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Private Sector

PRIVATE DONATIONS

FOUNDATION GRANTS

CHURCHES

UNITED WAY

PROJECT SHELTER

CLIENT FEES

Table 6: Reported Shelter Beds Available, FY 1987

Jurisdiction	Emergency Shelter Beds	Transitional Shelter Beds	Mission* Beds
Baltimore City	299	91	336
Central Maryland	168	0	55
Total	467	91	391

* See "Glossary of Terms"

about the League of Nations?" I said, "Yes." He said, "I read that book. I want to shake your hand."

I was really astounded by that. That's indicative of how people of all different backgrounds and educations and cultures—he was obviously an educated person who had been doing very well at one stage in his life and at the moment was not. But isn't that case that there are people from all walks of life and all backgrounds?

YOUNG PEOPLE SITUATION

Mr. POLOGE. It really is. Senator, in Baltimore, again, with the population I work with, 7,000 young people in the last year 16 years or older were dropped from the school rolls. If you're 16 years old and you aren't completing high school and you're in a society which is changing from manufacturing to services, you maybe can get a minimum wage job but average rents for a one bedroom apartment in Baltimore City is $311. That represents over half of what one would earn if they had a minimum wage job. And for a family on AFDC in Maryland, it would take 90 percent of their grant to pay that kind of rent.

So the disparity between what is available and what things cost is so great that it forces more and more different types of people into this trap of homelessness and the absence of an address and the inability then to find their way out of that maze.

Ms. HARPER. If I could just add, there is even a term which is the "economically homeless." It's a huge amount of people. Also, fire can wipe out an apartment and you can't find housing you can afford—if you were on rent control or whatever in one of the cities. And the other aspect of it is people who are displaced—a conversion of buildings to higher rent apartments or condominiums, those people are——

Mr. POLOGE. Gentrification.

Ms. HARPER. Exactly. So there is a mosaic and it's individuals out there, Senator Cranston, and that's what you experienced by the man who knew about your book. That's exactly the reality here, that circumstances are all that's between ourselves and they.

And what we need to really—I guess with the media and all of us, just to not close our eyes to it. I remember someone once told me, "Valerie, don't come from being fed when you're talking about the hungry, you must try to experience hunger." And that is, we're coming from being housed. We take it as a given that the water turns on.

I find the homeless as some of the most courageous and resourceful Americans around today. I don't know that I could walk all day, find a meal and then search around for a place to sleep. So it's a testament to who they are as people that they are surviving under these extraordinary conditions.

Mr. POLOGE. One of the Senators asked the question of people who may not want to come in from the cold. Peter Martin, who wrote an essay I think in Harpers in January about the homeless, talked about whether we have a social responsibility to care for those who may not want help, and there are some very alienated people in this country who, because of their pride, because of even the conditions of the shelters or mission—if you're an adult male

in Baltimore City where you have to go is a mission situation which does not afford any of the privacy or dignity that any of us would hold as sacrosanct to our own survival. It's no wonder that people may be out in the cold and it may be their pride or their condition that keeps them there, but I don't think we can deny that we have a responsibility to all those people?

Senator CRANSTON. In your organization's work, what are the ages of the youngest who come into your activities?

Mr. POLOGE. Well, given that many runaway and homeless youth, over half of them, report incidences of physical or sexual abuse, we have youngsters as young as 10 or 11 trying to get help. Most of the young people are 15 or 16 year olds that we work with, but we stop at 18 and many of the shelters don't pick up until 21, and so there's this huge—widening gap of unserved young people.

We've lowered the age of majority, hindsight is 20-20, but I oftentimes wonder about whether we've made any errors in judgment about that because we have not afforded the resources to young people in that 3 or 4 year age gap.

Senator CRANSTON. Throughout President Reagan's term, he's been stating that Government should be doing less or nothing about many problems and that private individuals, organizations, philantnropies, should be relied upon to solve many of our problems.

Both of you represent private groups that are helping tackle this problem. How much can private groups do alone, however, and how much do you think Government is needed to supplement and help carry the responsibility to this problem.

FEDERAL INVOLVEMENT

Mr. POLOGE. I think we ought to rephrase it that the Federal Government should never do anything that can be done—Government itself should never provide the direct service that can be done by the private sector. I think clearly Government ought to be involved in supporting the activities.

In central Maryland there's a group called Project Shelter. At the behest of the Baltimore City Council, the United Way took on responsibility for trying to organize this private fund-raising effort. Proposals were requested from the 18 shelters that exist in central Maryland and requests in excess of three-quarters of a million dollars were received. In 1½ years, this group was able to raise $200,000. There's a huge gap between three-quarters of a million and $200,000.

I think that there is a lot that can be done and a tremendous amount that has been done by the private voluntary sector, but we're talking about life, liberty, pursuit of happiness, which are protections that are guaranteed by the Government of the United States and Federal, State, and local governments have a major responsibility to share in this.

Ms. HARPER. In our particular organization, LIFE, what we find is an enormous willingness of the food industry to give products—unbelievable. All of the Ralph Markets, and they have 200 would participate—however, we only have three trucks and those three—well, actually now we have six runs that are providing the food for

the 23,000 weekly. We only can get to so many markets, but the food's there.

It's like the hungry are here and all the resources, food and the food companies who are cooperating exist. We are a private organization. We don't do it with government money at all, so we keep doing benefits and fortunately we have star power with Dennis and myself and others that do fund-raising.

But you see, the Government has to take leadership. Where is the leadership? It's not just the $500 million. It's the commitment that we are not going to have homeless in this Nation. And nothing against India with my next statement, but we are not Calcutta. We are a different society and so the money is something that the Congress can provide and they must. That's how I see it.

Mr. POLOGE. The inaction at the Federal level fosters the sense that it may not be as emergent an issue as it really is. I could go on, on a day-to-day basis, if it were not my life's work, and ignore the homeless. You don't have to step over homeless people in Baltimore, yet. It is something that you can ignore if you choose to.

Ms. HARPER. Most people that I talk to are thanking me for doing and asking, "what can I do"? and so forth. I think most people want to contribute and have it solved and aren't sure how. More and more are joining as private volunteers, but we have to have the leadership. We have to have the dollars.

Senator CRANSTON. We'll do our best here.

Ms. HARPER. Please. I urge you to stand firm and your colleagues and just make it happen.

Senator CRANSTON. I thank you both very, very much for coming and for your testimony and for all your very effective and dedicated work. And, Valerie, I'm proud to have you as a constituent.

Ms. HARPER. Thank you. I'm proud of you as my Senator. Keep at it.

Senator CRANSTON. I will. You, too.

Ms. HARPER. Thank you.

Senator CRANSTON. I would now like to invite the members of panel 3 to come forward. These panelists represent organizations in the forefront of providing services to the homeless. Ms. Maria Foscarinis of the National Coalition for the Homeless; Mark Talisman of the Council of Jewish Federation and Welfare Fund and a member of the Federal Emergency Food and Shelter Board; and Rev. J. Bryan Hehir, Secretary of the Department of Social Development and World Peace, U.S. Catholic Conference.

I thank you all for your presence, for what you're doing, for your participation today. I'd like to ask that, if you can, each of you in your summary statements which will cover what you wish to say verbally in 5 minutes—your full statements will appear in the record, but I'd like you to address, among other things, whatever else you wish to, the strengths and weaknesses of the current emergency food and shelter program of FEMA, how do you think that's doing.

Who wants to start?

Mr. TALISMAN. Maybe I should because I am at this point FEMA and apparently the only representative going to appear.

STATEMENT OF MARK TALISMAN, COUNCIL OF JEWISH FEDERATION AND WELFARE FUND; MEMBER, FEDERAL EMERGENCY FOOD AND SHELTER BOARD

Mr. TALISMAN. FEMA is the affectionate term because that is the place in which the emergency food and shelter program finds a home. It is the Federal Emergency Management and Administration, which has emergency in its title, and it happens to do a very good job at what it does. In this particular instance, it has been outstanding. Our board, as you know, has been authorized by the Congress to deal expeditiously with being able to allocate the funds that you in Congress have on an emergency basis authorized and appropriated.

The chair of the committee, by law, comes from FEMA. It happens to be Dennis Kwiatkowski, who is chief of the Individual Assistance Program. The reason I'm doing this is because I think, since the $50 million is to come to FEMA, everybody ought to know what FEMA is and how it works.

DILEMMA AT FEMA

And I wish I could tell you a wonderful, rosy story. The fact of the matter is, we're dealing with teaspoons that are ladling out little droplets of this ocean of a problem. It was best summed up for me by a friend who runs a Lutheran feeding program in northern Ohio where I'm from originally, who said:

> You guys are doing a wonderful job. Both the Congress should be blessed and each of you who works in this program. But don't ever forget, my dear friend, that the FEMA program is likened to the following dilemma: before FEMA, it was 2 bags of groceries in 3 months after FEMA it's three bags of groceries in 2 months.

And that's the dilemma. We have to put all of this into perspective.

I think there are some statistics that are real important. I put them out in a sheet for your staff and for the committee and everyone else to understand, because now with the last $70 million appropriation which is phase 5 of FEMA we now have total appropriations of $320 million. In phase 4, for example, there were local jurisdictions, local boards dealing with voluntary agencies totaling 1,800. Half of all civil jurisdictions in the country now have boards made up of local voluntary agencies and local government to allocate this Federal money to local private voluntary agencies. In the last phase of the $70 million in 1986, there were nearly 7,000 private voluntary agencies.

The most remarkable thing that I think you should know, Senator, is that the turnaround time from the time that the President has signed the legislation that you all have passed in the House and the Senate, has been no longer than 6 weeks time to get the money out on the streets.

I'd like to say we're terrific on the board. We're instruments. We sit in meetings that are so heart-breaking because we have to take exceptions from around the country from local private voluntary agencies and local boards.

What is an exception? An exception is when you have $70 million for a multibillion problem, you can't let certain kinds of things happen. One of the things you can't let happen is to use it for high level capital expenditures. If you allow this tiny bit of money, in-

cluding the new $50 million should it be passed, be used for renovation of any substantial sort, the money is gone in one city in 1 hour and we can't let that happen.

So we have to take these exceptions from around the country as to whether a deep southern rural board can allow a local member agency to install a refrigerator inside a van to allow food to be transported in that healthful way to the various agencies involved. We have to make a decision on that.

I'm not God. I cannot play Solomon. We have to decide as a country exactly how we are going to deal with these kinds of problems.

Another exception which is heart-rending is the fact that we can't allow these to be used for pharmaceuticals, which by the way, is a provision being considered in the new act before you. Why? Because if we allowed it to be used for pharmaceuticals, then there wouldn't be any money except for one city again.

So what happens? Well, some boards come in with exceptions and they plead with us. They say:

> You have to let us use it for pharmaceuticals because if you don't allow us to use this money for pharmaceuticals, people can't ingest food that we want to give them without the medicine.

Well, I'd like to see somebody who is wise enough to make that decision. I don't know how to do it.

Then there's the county in the deep rural South, the largest county in the South, that came to us with the following exception. We could grant it in this case. We felt real terrific about this. What was it? To use $6,000 of their allotment given to their particular local jurisdiction not on prepared food for delivery that week but on vegetable seed so that they could plant in the spring and in fact, as they said they would, they produced not $48,000 worth of food as they promised for delivery in the fall after the harvest of those vegetables, but $60,000 worth.

So America is willing to do whatever needs to be done to take care of this enormous problem. The problem is doing it with the resources in partnership between the Government and the private sector. There is a huge engine out there. You will have some of the most brilliant witnesses, as you have already, who are working so very hard to help solve these problems. They know how to do it. They need the resources to do it.

PARTICIPATION DIFFICULTIES FOR RELIGIOUS AGENCIES

One of the dilemmas we have, which is something that is not before this committee but should be immediately, is that HUD is now telling religious agencies that they cannot use renovation moneys if they are doing housing because they are religious agencies. Now obviously, there is a civil liberties question involved which has to be resolved in some way because otherwise somebody like the Salvation Army, which happens to provide among the most healthful and extensive services for the homeless, is out of business in regard to this kind of assistance.

There's got to be a way to deal with this in a meaningful way for all of us.

Senator CRANSTON. What's the basis for making that decision?

Mr. TALISMAN. I've got to tell you I'm not an expert in that area, nor am I able to understand how they are saying that to us. It hit us like a tornado 2 or 3 weeks ago and it seems to me to be an appropriate discussion I say, in deference to you, between the Congress and the Justice Department.

Senator CRANSTON. Who has issued that edict?

Mr. TALISMAN. That's from HUD.

Department of Defense—we had conversations, the FEMA board, with the Department of Defense. We have tried in all manner of speaking to figure out how to loosen up all of the surplus equipment that every congressional office knows about. They are located in capitals of every State in the Union. We thought we had a deal cooked up with the Department of Defense as recently as 2 months ago to be able to set up an accessible system on computer to loosen up some of the surplus equipment that is available to help the homeless and the hungry, both together. They're two different populations in some instances.

The deal never came to fruition because somehow the Defense Department couldn't see its way clear to do it. The new legislation mandates that kind of activity only in connection with real property. I would hope the rest of surplus property—equipment—could be done without legislation because the enormity of the problem that we're dealing with, as has been stated eloquently already, is such that it requires that kind of thing.

The final thing I'll say in regard to the money question is renovation. You in California receive in all phases of the FEMA program, all five phases, not including the new money being considered, $43.5 million for the whole State of California. You have had hundreds of agencies involved, including governmental agencies, dispersing these funds. It is like spitting in the wind. We haven't touched the issue which is the most costly, as the Community for Nonviolence here has indicated in its own work and any number of housing agencies. The cost of renovation of property is the No. 1 issue here. There aren't enough beds around and there are no private voluntary agencies with the capital capability of doing those kinds of things.

Help is needed in a magnificent and munificent way as quickly as possible.

The number of dilemmas that we run into are not of wanting to help. Everyone wants to help. I've got to tell you one of the rules of FEMA originally in spending the money—and I keep saying FEMA—the Federal Emergency Food and Shelter Program—is first to put a cap on our own administrative costs so nobody would accuse any private voluntary agency of using too much money for administrative costs. I wish that that were even a problem, that we could even consider. It isn't an issue.

There is a cap of 2 percent. That cap is too low and some agencies are having to actually go out of business because they can't afford to do the work. The United Way serves as a Secretariat of this entire National program for three-quarters of 1 percent of that total administration of 2 percent. It does all the work of all of the enormous computer activities and the tracking and delivery of the money in only 6 weeks time.

In addition, what we have found and what the rule that we have had at FEMA is to have this money that Congress has appropriated out on the streets helping people in 4 to 6 weeks at the most if we have succeeded—but we need to give our agencies more administrative support to do so. Five percent would do just that.

And that has happened. Mom and pop churches and synagogues that don't have the kind of money that we need to do these kinds of things have been serving the kind of food in their basements all the time. This is not something new. It started with the beginning of the Old Testament and continued through the New Testament. It's nothing new.

But the problem is how do you make more mashed potatoes, how do you make more creamed turkey or chipped beef or whatever will do. What they have done and what we have helped them to do, we hope, is to be able to be responsible in what they do in expanding their services by coming under the umbrella of another organization that has an auditable trail of paper so everybody will be satisfied that nobody is cheating, while—and no one is by the way—while they are able to expand their services.

I would hope, Senator, that we have some time in the near future that some of you here and Speaker Wright and Mr. Foley and Senators Heinz and Dixon and you, yourself, who has been an unbelievable supporter of this activity from the outset, to join us and help us make some of the decisions at the board level weekly when we have to come to the other end of this legislative trail to actually hand the money out.

I want you to know we're looking at the $50 million in this way right now; the one you're considering right now that the House has passed on suspension. We have already gone into our computers and are already prepared when the money is available as soon as it's available to reach down into the problem in the country so we won't wreck our own schedule of time which is as soon as possible out on the streets right directly to people who need it with as little off the top for any other purposes.

I wish to place in the record if I can several things that I think will be helpful for your staff and for you. One is the formula which we devised by which the money can be given out. I have to tell you one thing that's real interesting. You can't depend on the Bureau of Labor Statistics to do this job. The statistics are not current. They do not reflect in a serious way the immediate emergency that everybody is talking about here. So we had to figure out different systems, by the way, working with some very talented people at the Labor Department who recognized the problem.

Second, for your own edification and for ours, we published a book of some of the wonderful examples around the country of how private voluntary agencies are doing more with less, really to serve in a Montessori way, if you will, to help others who want to be involved and who don't know how to do it to help do it.

In addition, an independent study that was done of this whole program because each of us who serves on this board—representatives of United Way, Catholic Charities, National Council of Churches, Salvation Army, Red Cross and the Council of Jewish Federation—each of us wanted to make sure that what was being done on behalf of the trust that Congress placed in this board was

in fact the right thing that was being done because we don't have any time. And I want to place that evaluation by the Urban Institute in the record.

Finally, I wish simply to say to you that the amount of money and the amount of resources that are given to this board to deal with have been dealt with in the best way that we feel we can do it. The dilemma that all of us face, as is represented by your having called this emergency hearing and focused new attention on this problem, is that obviously the level of the problem is so enormous that we have to focus our national will on the problem to solve it in this country.

It would be the most appropriate way that I can think of to celebrate the 100th anniversary both of this body and the 200th of the Constitution. Thank you.

[The complete prepared statement of Mark Talisman follows:]

Testimony of Mark E. Talisman
Director, Washington Action Office
Council of Jewish Federations
Before the Senate Subcommittee on
Housing and Urban Affairs

January 29, 1987

Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee, I am Mark E. Talisman, Director of the Washington Action Office of the Council of Jewish Federations and a member of the National Board of the Federal Emergency Food and Shelter Program. I am very pleased to be here this morning to participate in the first Senate hearings on homelessness and to represent the National Board. Mr. Chairman, I am especially pleased to have the opportunity to sit before you and publicly congratulate you and thank you for your many years of dedicated and unswerving commitment to a just and compassionate America.

It is toward that shared goal that I address my remarks today. I have had both the privilege and the curse of serving as a member of the National Board of the Federal Emergency Food and Shelter Program since its creation in 1983. The privilege, as I am sure you all understand, is the opportunity to help people who are literally in life and death situations. The curse is learning more and more every day about the magnitude of this enormous and shameful problem in this bountiful country, and knowing how inadequate this small program is to meet the need.

First, let me talk about the privilege. The Federal Emergency Food and Shelter Program, created by Congress in Public Law 98-8 and continued through five funding cycles, is a remarkable program. In some ways it has surpassed the hopes of those of us who were involved in the early discussions during its formulation. Thanks to the tremendous support of members of this subcommittee, especially Senator Alan Dixon, a leader in the efforts to continue and expand the program, and Senators Heinz and D'Amato who were early and constant proponents, the National Board has distributed over $320 million to local jurisdictions to support voluntary and public agencies providing emergency services to those in need of food and/or shelter. If you have any doubt that the spirit of voluntarism is alive and well in the hearts of Americans, just listen to what has happened as a result of this extraordinary example of public-private partnership.

At the national level, the agencies represented on the National Board have contributed significant resources to see that their member agencies are informed about the program and participate in the fullest possible way. Printing, mailing and telephone costs have been absorbed as has the cost of providing staff to serve on the National Board. Only United Way of America, in its role as secretariat for the Board, is given some reimbursement for its services, but the .75% (that is, 3/4 of 1 percent) of the award amount does not begin to cover the cost of computer time, six indispensible full time staff people, rental of separate office space just to house the paper work for this program, and the processing of all checks sent to the agencies.

The volunatry agency members of the National Board -- Robert Beggan, senior vice president at United Way of America, Col. Ernest Miller, national affairs director for Salvation Army, Brother Joseph Berg, associate director for special programs at National Conference of Catholic Charities, Mary Anderson Cooper, assistant director of the Washington Office of the National Council of Churches, Enzo Biginatti of the American Red Cross, and myself for the Council of Jewish Federations -- join Dennis Kwiatkowski, who is the Chief of Individual Assistance at the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), to make decisions about the allocation of funds and the administration of the program.

I have to tell you that the time commitment is enormous, sometimes two or three meetings a week when we are making allocations, yet all of us have made this a priority and absences are very rare. I would also like to give you an idea of the type of Solomonic decisions we are regularly asked to make. Can the money be used to buy pharmaceuticals for people who cannot digest food without them? Can a rural county buy seeds to grow food instead of buying fruits and vegetables in a store? What about necessary clothing for homeless people who spend their daytime hours outside? We struggle mightily with these questions knowing there is no right or wrong answer only a small amount of money that does not come close to being enough.

Here I must say a few words about the incredible job that FEMA has done. I cannot say enough about the dedication of these models of civil service. We live in an era in which federal employees are frequently the focus of our frustrations with government and bureaucracies of all kinds. In this case, nothing could be further from the truth. Dennis Kwiatkowski has been a superb chair of the National Board for nearly four years. No one could do a more competent or more compassionate job than he is doing. He is assisted by a staff, some of whom you see sitting here today, that is absolutely first rate, from the program experts, to the auditors, to the Inspector General, to the Congressional liaison, to the clerical staff.

Mr. Chairman, attached to my testimony is a fact sheet that lists the statistics on this program. I won't read all of the numbers because you can see them for yourselves, but I think you will agree that the per meal figure of $.76 and the per night lodging figure of $2.50 are pretty remarkable. By the time this fiscal year ends, more than 300 million meals will have been served and 100 million nights of shelter provided.

It is clear that I am proud of the assistance that is made possible by the efforts of so many caring people involved with the Federal Emergency Food and Shelter Program. However, I do not want to be misunderstood. Thir program is not -- I repeat, not -- a sufficient response to the massive problems of homelessness, hunger and poverty. Providing shelter for $2.50 per night is an amazing feat, but for how long? How many nights must a family with small children share a single run down hotel room without kitchen facilities to even heat a bottle or store milk? How many meals should an old woman have to eat at a soup kitchen even if they only cost 76 cents apiece?

For all our best efforts, Senators, this program is a single drop in an otherwise empty bucket. I do not pretend to know all of the facts and figures on homelessness in America. I don't want to argue about whether the HUD study or the GAO study or somebody else's study is more accurate. What I know, what I am here to tell you on behalf of the National Board, is that the number of homeless men, women and children is growing faster than the number of available shelter beds. Food runs out while hungry people are still waiting in line at soup kitchen doors. As the debate rages over the actual number of homeless people - a number we will never accurately determine - thousands of men, women and children are desparately trying to stay alive through this cold and killing winter. Does it matter if there are 350,000 or 3 million homeless? If only 10 people freeze to death this winter is that okay because it's less than 20?

These are the real questions. They need real answers. In the Jewish religion there is no word for charity. The word we use is "Tzedakah" which means righteousness and justice. That is what we are talking about here.

I spent 20 years working on Capitol Hill and I know the myriad demands that are made on your time, your energy, and your consciences. I know, too, that the budget deficit must be brought under control and that caring for those in need costs money. Believe me, I do not envy you the decisions you must make in this august body.

First, we placed an unprecedented 2% cap on administrative costs to assure that every possible dollar went into service delivery. A study done for the National Board by the Urban Institute showed actual administrative costs to be 9.6%. We are now going into the fourth year of this program and we are unfairly asking the local agencies to continue to pick up the administrative costs as well as increase their services. The National Board recommends that the cap by increased to 5%, not the full cost, but a fairer sharing of the burden.

It is also recommended that any authorizing legislation be multi-year so that we do not have the long gaps in funding that have plaqued local provider agencies. To this end, it would also be helpful if there were a roll-over provision to allow any funds that are returned or unspent at the end of the fiscal year to be carried over into the next year. It seems wrong, when the need is so clearly great, that over a million dollars has gone back to the Treasury at the end of program periods while agencies struggle to keep doors open between funding cycles.

At all levels of this program it is the word "emergency" that stands out. The reason for using voluntary organizations and the Federal Emergency Management Agency was that both are experienced at getting help to people in need fast. Congress mandated that this program operate with as little bureaucracy and as much speed as possible. A look at this last round will show you that we have heeded your instructions.

The Continuing Resolution was signed into law on October 18, 1986. The Treasury had 30 days to give a letter of credit to FEMA. It came on the 18th of November. The National Board met several times to make allocations decisions and by the first week of December all jurisdictions were notified of their award amount. Local boards had 25 working days to return local plans listing agencies to receive checks. The vast majority of the plans, over 70%, came in before the deadline even though the Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year holidays interfered. Less than 60 days elapsed between the time FEMA was given permission to spend the money and the time those funds were in local agencies providing services. We expect to be able to move even more quickly with the next appropriation.

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Senator CRANSTON. Thank you very much.
Ms. Foscarinis, go right ahead.

STATEMENT OF MARIA FOSCARINIS, WASHINGTON COUNSEL, NATIONAL COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS

Ms. FOSCARINIS. Mr. Chairman, thank you for having us.

On December 15, 1982, the House Committee on Housing held the first congressional hearings on homelessness since the Great Depression. Since that time, evidence has continued to mount of the crisis now facing our country.

Today marks the first time the U.S. Senate has held a hearing on homelessness. I understand that the committee is now developing legislation. It is desperately needed.

ESTIMATED 2 TO 3 MILLION AMERICANS WITHOUT BASICS

Since the first congressional hearings, homelessness has continued to explode. It is now a national crisis. We estimate that about 2 to 3 million men, women and children around the country are doing without the very basics, doing without a bed to sleep in or food to eat.

In the most industrially advanced country in this world, millions of Americans are quite literally struggling for their survival.

Last September, we published a report called "National Neglect—National Shame." I would like to submit that report for inclusion in the record as well.

The report found that over the past year nationwide homelessness increased by 25 percent. That's a nationwide average. That's a huge increase. The report also found that families with children are joining the ranks of the homeless in record numbers. They are the single fastest growing segment of today's homeless population.

What that means is that homelessness today knows none of the traditional stereotypes commonly attributed to it. It means that today the face of homelessness is the face of a mother who must choose between paying the rent and feeding her children. It is the face of the old woman whose social security check cannot be stretched to pay for the cheapest boarding house room. It is the face of the veteran who returns from service to his country and is abandoned. Increasingly, it is the face of a child.

The statistics are grim. I'll summarize them. Families, we estimate, with children are now about 30 percent of the homeless population. Veterans, as we've heard, are now over 30 percent of the homeless adult population. Mentally ill persons are now about 25 to 30 percent of the population and a significant and growing number of homeless people are now working men and women who must live in a shelter because their wages are not enough to pay the rent.

I don't think that the causes of homelessness are mysterious. No one can really dispute that the leading cause is now the extreme scarcity of low-income housing for poor people in this country. As I'm sure you know, Mr. Chairman, over the past 6 years federally subsidized housing programs have literally been decimated. They have been massively defunded. At the same time, gentrification, as

we heard, has greatly diminished the supply of affordable housing in the private housing market.

Poor people have been squeezed from both ends. They have quite literally been squeezed out of their homes and onto the street. Of course, affordable housing is a relative concept. Housing can be afforded only based on the income a person is making.

Another cause of homelessness is welfare checks that cannot be stretched and that force choices between basic necessities.

Another cause of homelessness is wages that are not enough to cover the rent and other necessities.

No one can really dispute that homelessness is a national problem. What that means is that a Federal response is desperately needed.

Congressional action, particularly in the face of the administration's lack of response, is critical. Yet, Mr. Chairman, I must tell you that again and again in visiting the offices of Members of Congress I have been struck by a dichotomy, a dichotomy between sympathy for the homeless privately expressed and a willingness to publicly take a stand for the homeless. I have been told that political reality prevents Members of this Congress from publicly taking a position in saying that homelessness is not right in America today. That is not right, Mr. Chairman.

The reality now faced by America's homeless men and women cannot wait. It cannot wait for more favorable political times. The time for action is now. Homeless Americans do not need promises. They do not need sympathy. They need action.

What we need to do I think is rather simple. What we need first is a recognition that homelessness exists and that it is a national crisis. Then we must act accordingly. We need two things. We need emergency relief now. We need to relieve the misery of homeless Americans that are now on the street. We need immediate funding for shelter, for food, for basic medical care. That relief is embodied in the Urgent Relief to the Homeless Act which I urge you, Mr. Chairman, and your colleagues to adopt, endorse, support, and do everything in your power to ensure that it is enacted.

$50 MILLION IS A DROP IN THE BUCKET

The $50 million passed in the House I hope will be passed by the Senate, but it really is a drop in the bucket. It's important but it's a Band-Aid. It's an important Band-Aid, but it's not enough. $500 million is not enough. It will go a long way, but we need to look at longer-term solutions. Emergency solutions will not work. They will only postpone the day of reckoning.

We need a serious comprehensive Federal response that addresses not just the immediate symptoms but also the causes of homelessness. That kind of comprehensive legislation is contained in the Homeless Persons Survival Act supported by Representative Leland and Senator Gore. It provides for not just emergency relief but also preventive measures and long-term solutions. And I urge you, Mr. Chairman, to support that legislation fully as well.

I have to close by saying this. Last night I was at a men's shelter here in Washington, DC. I was visiting with a man who is living in that shelter. He is a veteran. He has hit hard times. He has been

in the shelter since just before Christmas. He has never been homeless before. He asked me if I could help him. I said that I would do my best.

Mr. Chairman, I cannot go back to that man and look him in the eye and tell him that there is nothing that his Government can do now that he needs help. I do not believe that you could do that. I do not believe that any member of this committee could do that and I do not believe that any Member of the Congress could look that man in the eye and say that. I hope we won't have to.

Thank you.

[The complete prepared statement of Maria Foscarinis and report follow:]

What I ask is that in all of your deliberations you put people first. The basic necessities of maintaining human life -- food, shelter, mental and physical care -- must always come first.

In the past six years, nearly every major housing program has been cut or eliminated. The important emphasis we have rightly placed on homelessness and temporary shelter relief has kept us from focusing on long-term solutions. We are facing a crisis in low and moderate income housing in this country. People who have no place to live need a place to live, not just a place to sleep for the night. Even the best homeless shelter is no place to raise a family.

Every study that has been done on the subject shows that large numbers of the homeless are deinstitutionalized mental patients. Where are the promised community based services, group homes, counselling centers that were supposed to accompany the policy of deinstitutionalization? Fulfilling this promise will cost money. Not fulfilling it will cost lives.

This is the curse that I spoke of earlier. The more I learn about the magnitude of the problem, the more troubled I am that we are putting bandaids on cancers. It will not work. We must find the national resolve to face the underlying issues and address them. We can, I believe, find solutions if we put the creative talents of this great and generous nation to work.

On behalf of the National Board, Mr. Chairman, I can tell you that we will continue to do our best to meet the ongoing emergency as long as Congress wishes the program to operate. I am grateful for the opportunity to testify before you and will be happy to answer any questions.

EMERGENCY FOOD AND SHELTER
NATIONAL BOARD PROGRAM

Timeframe

	Public Law	Allocation	Date Signed	Date Awarded	Time Elapsed
Phase I	PL 98-8	$50 million	3/24/83	5/9/83	6 weeks
Phase II	PL 98-151	10 million	11/14/83	12/16/83	5 weeks
	PL 98-181	30 million	11/21/83	12/16/83	
Phase III	PL 98-396	70 million	8/22/84	10/15/84	8 weeks
Phase IV	PL 99-88	20 million	8/15/85	10/21/85	5 weeks
	PL 99-160	70 million	11/25/85	1/31/86	10 weeks
Phase V	PL 99-500	70 million	10/18/86	12/8/86	7 weeks

1/87

EMERGENCY FOOD AND SHELTER
NATIONAL BOARD PROGRAM

Characteristics

	Phase I	Phase II	Phase III	Phase IV*	Phase V**	Total
Public Law	PL 98-8	PL 98-151 PL 98-181	PL 98-396	PL 99-88 PL 99-160	PL 99-500	
Allocation	$50 million	$40 million	$70 million	$90 million	$70 million	$320 million
Civil Jurisdictions Funded	961	839	1341	1800	1393	
Agencies Funded	3460	3627	6003	6968	5391	
Additional Meals Provided	51 million	33.7 million	60 million	74.7 million	60 million	279.4 million
Per Capita Meals	$.70	$.75	$.71	$.60	$.71	
Additional Nights Lodging Provided	6.9 million	6.3 million	18 million	27 million	18 million	76.2 million
Per Capita Shelter	$3.15	$2.17	$2.24	$1.64	$2.24	

*Phase IV figures are based on estimates and are changing as final reports are audited.

**Phase V figures are projections based on results from previous $70 million allocation (Phase III).

1/87

Testimony of
Maria Foscarinis
Washington Counsel
National Coalition for the Homeless
Before the
Subcommittee on Housing and Urban Affairs
Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs
United States Senate
January 29, 1987

My name is Maria Foscarinis. I am Washington counsel to the National Coalition for the Homeless, a federation of organizations, agencies and individuals from some 40 States and Counties across the country committed to the principle that decent shelter, affordable housing and sufficient food are fundamental rights in a civilized society.

On December 15, 1982, the House Subcommittee on Housing held the first congressional hearings on homelessness since the Great Depression. Since then, thousands of pages of hearing transcripts have been filled with testimony describing the misery of the nation's homeless poor. Dozens of published reports have described the ravages created by the deprivation of basic survival resources. Hundreds of newspaper articles have brought homelessness to the attention of the country -- and the world.

Yet despite this evidence -- indeed, despite the daily suffering on our streets that is obvious to anyone who cares to look -- no serious federal action has been taken. Today marks the first time a committee of the United States Senate has taken testimony on contemporary homelessness. I understand that the

committee is now developing legislation. It is desperately needed.

Since those first congressional hearings, homelessness in American has continued to grow unabated. It has now reached crisis proportions. Today, in the richest nation on earth, an estimated 2-3 million men, women and children are going without the basics: a bed to sleep in and a meal to eat. In the most industrially advanced country in the world, millions are desperately struggling for their very survival.

Recent reports confirm the reality that is now obvious on the streets of America. Last September we published the results of a nationwide survey in a report called "National Neglect/National Shame: America's Homeless, Winter 1986-87." We found a 25% nationwide average increase in the number of homeless persons over the last year alone. The U.S. Conference of Mayors report, published in December 1986, surveying a different set of cities, found a similar increase of 20%.

Both reports found that families with children are joining the ranks of the homeless in unprecedented numbers. They are the fastest growing segment of the homeless population.

What this means is that across the country, shelters are being forced to turn homeless persons away in record numbers.

It means that in Los Angeles, where there are 33,000-50,000 homeless persons, there are at most 6,000 shelter spaces, including "sit-up" space. That means: no bed, just a chair to "sit up" in all night.

It means that in suburban San Fernando Valley, requests for emergency shelter rose 1000% last year.

It means that this past July in Baltimore, Maryland, half of all homeless families seeking shelter had to be turned away.

It means that in Dallas, Texas, a network of church-run shelters saw an increase of 76% in homeless families seeking shelter.

It means that in the New York City shelter system, homeless children outnumber homeless single adults.

And, finally, it means that homelessness today knows none of its traditional boundaries. The face of homelessness today is that of a mother who must chose between paying the rent and feeding her children. It is the face of an old woman whose social security checks can't stretch to pay for a boarding house room. It is the face of the veteran who -- having served his country -- now wanders the streets, abandoned by his government. And increasingly, it is the face of a child.

The statistics that summarize this human disaster are grim. Families now make up over 30% of the homeless population. Over 30% of homeless adults are veterans. About 25-30% of homeless persons suffer from mental illness. And significant numbers of homeless persons are now working men and women earning wages so low, that, night after night, after the day's work is done, they must return to a shelter.

The causes of homelessness are not mysterious. Over the past six years, the current Administration -- with the acquiescence of Congress -- has systematically and deliberately adopted policies that inevitably lead to homelessness. The nation's homeless poor are the first -- and most desperate -- victims of these distorted national priorities.

There can be no doubt that the leading cause of today's mass homelessness is the extreme scarcity of affordable housing. As you know, Mr. Chairman, federally subsidized housing has been massively defunded over the past six years. Waiting lists for subsidized housing are now years long around the country. At the same time, unplanned gentrification has virtually eliminated many sources of low-cost housing in the private market. Poorer Americans are literally being squeezed out of their houses and on to the streets.

But affordable housing is a relative concept. Homelessness is also caused by welfare checks that are so low they force unbearable choices between necessities. And it is caused by wages so low they offer no hope of paying the rent.

A federal response to homelessness is desperately needed. And in the face of the Administration's inaction, Congressional action is imperative. Yet, time and again, Mr. Chairman, in visiting the offices of Members of Congress, I have been told that the political "climate" is not now right to help the homeless. I have been told that the current "political

reality" prevents Members who privately profess sympathy from publicly taking a stand for America's homeless.

The reality faced daily by the men, women and children now on the street cannot wait. America's homeless do not need sympathy, they need action. They do not need promises, they need housing. They do not need excuses, they need jobs. And America's homeless do not seek charity, they demand justice. Their needs cannot wait for more favorable political times.

What is needed is, first, a recognition that homelessness is now a national crisis that requires an immediate federal response. The few federal programs that now exist to aid the homeless must be enforced. The agencies charged with their administration should no longer be permitted to ignore them.

Second, urgent legislative action should be taken to alleviate the immediate misery now suffered by the homeless. Funding is urgently needed for the basics: food, shelter, medical attention. These resources could literally make the difference between life and death for many homeless Americans this winter. These proposals are embodied in the Urgent Relief for the Homeless Act now pending in the House. Mr. Chairman, I urge you and your colleagues on this committee to lend your full support to this bill.

Third, we need long-term solutions. We need a comprehensive federal response to provide not only emergency relief but also preventive and long-term measures. Most of all, we need housing.

The Homeless Persons' Survival Act, sponsored by Rep. Leland and Sen. Gore, provides a comprehensive, serious federal response to both the immediate and long-term needs of homeless persons. I urge the committee to lend that bill its full support.

NATIONAL NEGLECT / NATIONAL SHAME

AMERICA'S HOMELESS:

Outlook - Winter 1986-87

A Report by The National Coalition for the Homeless

Acknowledgements

The National Coalition for the Homeless thanks the scores of service providers and advocates from around the country who took the time to provide the information presented in this report. We also thank the volunteers who generously donated their time and resources to help us gather and present this information. We especially thank Andrea Akita, Daly Hayes, Terry Lynch, Glenn Manismin, and Bill Tyndall for their help.

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Introduction

Today in America more men, women and children are homeless than at any time since the Great Depression. In city after city, town after town, record numbers of Americans lack even the basics: a bed to sleep in and a meal to eat. Today, in the richest nation on earth, growing numbers of Americans are engaged in a primitive struggle for survival.

The outlook for this coming winter is grim. Over the past week, the National Coalition for the Homeless surveyed 21 cities across the country. In each case, the message was bleak. While the ranks of the homeless continue to swell, with an average increase of 25%, the gap between the need for emergency shelter and the resources to provide it widens. And while the causes of homelessness deepen, its effects continue to spread across demographic boundaries: families with children are now the fastest growing segment of the nation's homeless population.

These conclusions are based on reports by dozens of shelter operators, advocates and city officials around the country. Those working on the front lines reported this grim reality: shelters already full beyond capacity in summertime, turning away dozens nightly; increases in the number of shelters that are still unable to meet the need; waiting lists for subsidized housing that are years long; children growing up living in cars, abandoned buildings and dangerous welfare hotels.

Across the country, the same basic causes were cited: primary among them was the extreme scarcity of affordable

housing. Again and again, those working on the front lines described the effects of the recent massive cutbacks in federally subsidized housing. And again and again, they cited the cuts in federal benefits programs that leave mothers unable to both pay the rent and put food on the table.

Asked to evaluate the federal government's role in responding to the needs of the homeless, these front line workers again were unanimous: their representatives in Washington have provided little -- if any -- affirmative assistance. Across the country, local efforts are unable to meet immediate emergency needs, much less respond to the underlying causes of what has become a national scandal.

Homelessness is a national problem, yet the federal government has virtually no policy to address it. Homelessness is a national crisis, yet the current Administration denies its very existence. No one is for homelessness, yet homelessness is the inevitable result of policies set by this Administration and acquiesced in by this Congress.

Over the past few years, scores of witnesses, including homeless persons themselves, have come forth to testify in Congress on the depths of the problem. Thousands of transcript pages have documented the human misery that now afflicts millions of Americans. Dozens of reports analyze this data. Yet while hearings are held and debates continue, growing numbers of men, women and children are doing without the basic resources necessary to survive. The lesson to be drawn -- the lesson that

must be drawn -- from this survey is simple and it is urgent: enough has been said -- the time has come for action.

* * *

What follows is, first, a city-by-city description of the results of our research. Second, an analysis of the causes of contemporary homelessness with special emphasis on the role played by government policies at the federal level. Third, specific recommendations for a serious federal response to homelessness.

Overview

The data gathered for this report reveals continued widespread homelessness, with no relief in sight; the outlook for the coming winter months is grim. The following is a summary of the report's major findings:

- Homelessness is increasing around the country at an average rate of 25%.
- Families with children are joining the ranks of the homeless in record numbers.
- Existing shelters are unable to meet the rising need and are routinely forced to turn homeless families and individuals away. On the average, less than 20% of the immediate emergency need for beds is being met.
- A drastic shortage of affordable housing is a leading cause of homelessness.
- Cutbacks in federal housing programs are primary causes of this shortage.
- Cutbacks in federal entitlement programs contribute by precluding poor families and individuals from competing in the shrinking housing market.
- Local governments and communities, even when responsive, are unable alone to meet the need for emergency aid.
- The current federal response to homelessness is grossly inadequate.

Certain basic data are summarized in the following chart:

City	Homeless	Beds	Increase in Homeless Over Past Year
Albuquerque, NM	2,000-3,000	250	20%
Boston, MA	5,000-8,000	1,400	10-20%
Burlington, VT	75-120	60	10%
Charleston, WV	300	200	50%
Cincinatti, OH	1,600	800	*
Dallas, TX	14,000	1,000	40%**
Denver, CO	2,500-3,000	950	25%
Los Angeles, CA	33,000-50,000	3,640	26%
Miami, FL	9,000	350	24%
Milwaukee, WI	5,000	600	20%
New Haven, CT	100-250	48-49	50-75%
New Orleans, LA	1,200-2,000	523	*
New York, NY	60,000-80,000	22,000	20%
Phoenix, AZ	4,000-6,000	428	15-20%
Portland, OR	7,000	2,000	*
Providence, RI	3,500	177	25%
Richmond, VA	3,850	150-200	10-20%
Seattle, WA	3,000	1,500	10%
St. Louis, MO	10,000-15,000	428	100%
Tucson, AZ	2,000-3,000	165	25%
Washington, DC	10,000-15,000	1,800	10%

* Not Available.

** Includes requests for emergency assistance other than shelter, such as requests for emergency rental and food assistance.

Albuquerque, New Mexico

Need

Estimates of the homeless population range from 2,000 to 3,000. A recent survey found a large percentage of families among this group.[1]

The numbers are expected to continue to increase at a rate of about 20% this winter, with at least 150 - 200 persons sleeping outdoors each night.[2]

Resources

There are about 250 shelter beds available; no increase is expected this winter in beds or funding.[3] In addition, there is no transitional housing at all, and no additions in long-term housing are expected.[4]

Saint Martin's hospitality house, a day center for homeless persons, has been in existence since July, 1985. Since then, it was forced to move to a new facility six times larger than the original one in order to accommodate the growing need.[5] In the period from February to July, 1986, St. Martin's served an average of 3,815 homeless persons per month.[6]

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[1] Telephone interview with Sally McCabe, Health Care for the Homeless Project, St. Joseph's Hospital, September 22, 1986.

[2] Id.

[3] Id.

[4] Telephone interview with Gail Andrews, Administrator, Saint Martin's Hospitality House, September 22, 1986.

[5] Id.

[6] Id.

Barrett House, a 21-person shelter, was opened on August 15, 1985. Since then, 322 adults and 158 children have been sheltered there.[7] In June, 1986, 61 women with 92 children, as well as three entire families, had to be turned away. According to Sister Rita Johnson, the shelter has been "very busy" all summer and is currently full.[8]

According to Sister Rita, homelessness is on the increase, and more families are on the street. She notes that the problem is particularly acute in New Mexico, where there are virtually no provisions for services for single women with children.

The only government funds for shelter are federal FEMA and CDBG funds -- about $246,000 for the past year. The state received about $80,000 from Hands Across America; about one half went to Albuquerque.

Causes

The most significant cause of homelessness in Albuquerque is the shortage of affordable housing. In addition, deinstitutionalization, unemployment and federal social service cuts contribute.[9]

According to Sally McCabe, of the Health Care for the Homeless Project at St. Joseph's hospital, AFDC payments are

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[7] Telephone interview with Sister Rita Johnson, Barrett House, September 22, 1986.

[8] Id.

[9] Telephone interview with Sally McCabe, September 22, 1986.

"pathetic" and SSI benefits are "inadequate." Food stamp payments are "tolerable but not good." Cuts in federal low income housing programs are the "biggest contributor" to the problem.

Federal Response

According to McCabe, "one shot" infusions of federal money are "not good enough." What is needed is a comprehensive program: the Homeless Persons' Survival Act is a "good picture of what the federal government should be doing."

Baltimore, Maryland

Need

Baltimore's homeless population is between 20-25,000, and is now increasing at a rate of about 20%.[10] Mary Slicher, of Project PLASE, reports that PLASE has seen its "turn-aways increase to the point where they are double the number we are able to help." Of all parts of the homeless population, "the greatest increase has been in the number of homeless families seeking shelter."

Resources

In Baltimore there are only 500-600 shelter beds available. There is approximately $1 million in state funds available under the state's "homeless program," as of 11/1/86. State-optional assistance programs "have been cut to the bone," according to Slicher. Only $156 is available, for a two-month period, regardless of need. According to Slicher: "There has been no commitment by state government to prevent or eliminate human suffering. Restrictions have reduced the level of aid dramatically below the poverty level."

A major problem is that shelters are closing because of increasing operating costs and funding uncertainties caused by government cutbacks. "The majority of shelter funds come from private contributions, which are cyclical and unreliable." In

[10] Telephone interview with Mary Slicher, Project PLASE, September 23, 1986; telephone interview with Stephanie King, Greater Baltimore Shelter Network, September 24, 1986.

1986, shelters in central Maryland received 68% of their funding from private contribution (including religious organizations) and only 16% from the state. In Baltimore, 58% of shelter funding came from private sources. The typical state grant to a shelter for the homeless "is only $10,000 per year."

According to a report issued by the Greater Baltimore Shelter Network to the Maryland Governor on homelessness in 1985, there were 31 shelters in central Maryland (Baltimore and the five surrounding counties). The report found that in the past several years there "has been a dramatic increase in both shelter use and the numbers of homeless people shelters cannot help and must turn away." Homelessness is "a very serious and apparently growing problem." The Report shows:

Year	Shelter Beds	Turn-aways
1982	11,220	10,000
1983	11,331	10,839
1984	16,324	12,448
1985	14,688	19,390

Stephanie King of the Greater Baltimore Shelter Network reports that "turn-aways are up dramatically, particularly families." There are only 3 shelters in Baltimore that serve families. In one recent week in July, half of all families that requested shelter had to be turned away. Says King, "It will be worse this winter." 95 shelter beds in Baltimore will be lost, while an average of 100 homeless people are turned away from shelters every night. The current turn-away rate would suggest

that as many as 25,000 turn-aways occurred in 1986 (adjusted downward to eliminate double counting) and that there are perhaps a similar number of homeless people. King said that "homelessness clearly appears to be increasing significantly."

According to King, in FY 1985, 35% of the central Maryland homeless population were families with children, "and the number of homeless families has clearly increased since then." The Baltimore YWCA was forced to turn away 68% of the families requesting shelter in a 9-day period in July, while the Salvation Army had to turn away 46% of the families seeking shelter. The Health and Welfare Council, a non-profit organization, operates a shelter "help line" in Baltimore. In June 52% of the families calling the help line could not be helped, and in July 57% of those calling could not be helped.

Causes

According to Slicher, the primary cause is the lack of low-income housing.

Slicher reports that there is a 3-year waiting list, comprising 45,000 people, for section 8 and other low-income housing. "We have returned to an environment of the '50s where government takes no role in public housing and has no commitment to help the unfortunate and the homeless."

Boston, Massachusetts

Need

In Boston, approximately 5,000-8,000 are now homeless. About 40% -- including the "invisible" homeless -- are members of families.

The major change over the past year was an increase in the numbers of homeless families, particularly young families. In addition, there was an increase in the number of black adults, as well as homeless persons from rural and suburban parts of the state.

Overall, the population this year has increased about 10-20%.

Resources

Boston currently has about 1,400 shelter beds. This results in a shortfall of about 1,600 - 3,600 beds.[11]

Over one third of the homeless population receives no government benefits.[12]

Causes

The major causes of homelessness are rising housing costs and a decline in affordable housing -- and, in particular, a lack of federal money for housing.[13] This year there was a 10,000 shortfall in units needed to meet the demand in federally

[11] Telephone interview with Susan Marsh, Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless, September 22, 1986.

[12] Telephone interview with Susan Tracey, Boston Emergency Shelter Commission, September 22, 1986.

[13] Telephone interview with Susan Marsh, September 22, 1986.

subsidized housing -- in addition to the existing 70,000 unit shortfall from prior years.[14]

Poverty, and the decline in relative value of payments under income support programs, also are major contributors. In Massachusetts, the general public assistance level is 40% below the federal poverty line.[15]

Federal Role

According to Susan Tracy of the City's Emergency Shelter Commission, "federal cutbacks are a big hurt. Because of the lack of a federal program the response to homelessness is very helter skelter."

Burlington, Vermont

There are now approximately 75 - 120 homeless persons in Burlington, with an expected increase of 10% this winter.[16] The biggest change over the past year has been an increase in homeless families and youth.[17]

Two shelters provide a total of 60 beds. According to Jim Rader, City Clerk, the "biggest cause of homelessness is federal cutbacks. The National Coalition's Survival Act is on the right track."

[14] Id.

[15] Id.

[16] Telephone interview with Jim Rader, City Clerk, Burlington, Vermont, September 22, 1986.

[17] Id.

Charleston, West Virginia

Need

Currently, there are approximately 300 homeless persons in Charleston; there are about 200 shelter beds. Statewide, there are large increases in the rural homeless population: according to Jim Lewis, of the West Virginia Coalition for the Homeless, "the rural problems are enormous. We're concerned that homelessness is getting a lot of urban press." In addition, Debbie Weinstein of Sojourners House, a Charleston shelter, reports increases in the numbers of women and families.

The prospects for this coming winter are "terrible" according to Lewis. There is currently an increase of about 50%, according to several shelter operators; that rate is expected to continue this winter.

Barbara Ferraro of Covenant House, a day and overnight shelter, reports that the numbers of clients served have increased over the past year from about 15 per night to about 30, and from 50-60 per day to about 75 per day. In addition, she reports a "definite increase" in numbers of women and children, particularly young mothers and young pregnant women. The percentage of women and children has increased over the past year from about 5-10% to 30-50%.

Causes

Leading causes of homelessness in West Virginia are unemployment -- particularly among youth -- and lack of

affordable housing.[18] According to Weinstein, at Sojourner's House, clients "cut across boundaries." Many are young women trying to break into the work force, women with no family support, and middle-aged, "displaced" women. Drug and alcohol abusers are not a major segment of the client population.

Federal Response

According to Lewis, current federal programs "are designed to make people homeless." In addition, he notes, "there's no national commitment to the problem; we're doing band-aid work."

[18] Telephone interview with Jim Lewis, West Virginia Coalition for the Homeless, September 22, 1986.

Dallas, Texas

Need

Estimated numbers of homeless persons range up to 14,000 over the past year. Major increases over the past year -- totaling about 40% -- have been in families, women with children, and minorities.[19]

The number of those seeking shelter are expected to continue to increase this winter.[20]

According to recent press reports, the number of families seeking assistance at agencies providing shelter and emergency food have increased dramatically over the past year. The East Dallas Cooperative Parish had an increase of 22% in requests for assistance this summer, increasing to more than 600 families per month.[21]

The Dallas Life Foundation reported a 30% increase in the number of people seeking shelter during summer 1986 over the previous year.[22] North Dallas Shared Ministries, a coalition of some 40 churches, has had a 76% increase in requests for emergency assistance for rent -- to avoid eviction -- and food.[23] Even in the northern Dallas suburb of Richardson, Texas, about

[19] Telephone interview with John Fullinwider, Common Ground, Dallas, Texas, September 22, 1986.

[20] Id.

[21] Dallas Morning News, August 31, 1986.

[22] Id.

[23] Id.

250 families per month are seeking emergency food, clothing, medical or job assistance. Ginger York, director of the Network of Community Services in Richardson, told reporters, "We're seeing an awful lot of people living in their cars, especially in the month of August. We see people who have not eaten in two or three days, and these are longtime residents of this city."[24]

Given those extremely high summertime increases, the prospects for the winter are even more grim.

Resources

There are only about 1000 shelter beds or spaces available in Dallas. Total city government funding for aid to the homeless in Dallas is less than $200,000 annually.[25]

A coalition of nine local churches is hoping to open the Downtown Dallas Family Shelter by November 1, with space for 30 families. According to John Fullinwider of Common Ground, in Dallas, "that's considered a major leap for Dallas."

Causes

The major cause is the lack of affordable rental housing, which has resulted from the destruction of low-income neighborhoods, the demolition and boarding up of public housing, the loss of HUD-subsidized housing, and the lack of family rental housing. There are about 36,000 evictions in Dallas each year, according to city statistics -- almost 100 per day.[26]

[24] Id.

[25] Telephone interview with John Fullinwider.

[26] Id.

There are only 7000 public housing units -- 1200 of which are boarded up -- for a total city population of 1 million.[27]

Deinstitutionalization from state schools and hospitals has also contributed to homelessness, because of the lack of adequate community programs. For instance, the Dallas County Mental Health/Mental Retardation Department operates less than 30 apartments for the homeless mentally ill. According to city statistics, more than 2,000 individuals are released from Terrell State Hospital to the Dallas area each year.[28]

Fullinwider notes that in a recent poll 54% of the population favored an increase in shelter for the homeless; 56% said they would pay increased taxes to finance more shelter.[29] Yet, in the budget deliberations for fiscal 86-87, the Dallas City Council deleted a $100,000 line item for homeless families from its Community Development Block Grant budget -- despite the fact that both the city manager and the Community Development Advisory Community recommended the outlay.[30]

Federal Response

According to Fullinwider, the federal government has been devoting its energy to proving "there's no problem" and is denying its responsibility. Beyond the immediate emergency needs, federal resources for housing production, rehabilitation and preservation are needed.

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[27] Id.

[28] Id.

[29] Id.

[30] Id.

Denver, Colorado

Need

There are now about 2,500 to 3,000 homeless persons in Denver, an increase of about 25% over the past year.[31] A large rise in homeless families contributed to this increase.[32]

Resources

Only about 950 shelter beds are available -- a shortage of 550 to 1,050. No federal or state funding at all is provided for shelters, and according to Mary Ann Gleason of the Colorado Coalition for the Homeless, local funding is "minimal." About 90% of the funding for shelter beds derives from private sources.

Causes

According to the most recent study of the availability of low cost housing in Denver, the city was about 20,000 units short of the need for affordable housing.[33] According to Gleason, the federally subsidized units still available are not being used to house the homeless: "the homeless are being left out."

Additionally, unemployment in Denver is up to 7.1%. Low AFDC payments, tightening of eligibility requirements and

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[31] Telephone interview with Mary Ann Gleason, Colorado Coalition for the Homeless, September 19, 1986.

[32] Id.

[33] Id.

deinstitutionalization of the mentally ill were also cited as leading causes of homelessness.[34]

Federal Role

According to Gleason, housing is a "key problem . . . a right to housing needs to be a constitutional right."

The numbers are expected to continue to go up this winter. Says Gleason: "it's only going to get worse."

[34] Id.

Los Angeles

Need

There are now about 33,000 to 50,000 homeless persons in Los Angeles.[35] Over the past year, more families and children have become homeless. Homelessness in suburban areas is also on the rise: In San Fernando Valley, a middle class suburban area, applications to the emergency shelter increased 1,000%.[36] A recent study indicated that few of Los Angeles' homeless are migrants -- most are natives of the city.[37]

The current rate of increase -- about 20% -- is expected to continue this coming winter.[38] In addition, a rise in numbers of evictions is expected, with a corresponding increase in homelessness. Ruth Schwartz, of the Shelter Partnership, an organization providing technical assistance to shelter operators, reports that a city-wide hotline received 11,669 requests for shelter in June, 1986. For the first time, shelter requests now top the list.

Only 10-20% of the need is now being met. There are currently about 5,000 to 6,000 shelter spaces provided --

[35] Telephone interview with Gary Blasi, Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles, September 22, 1986, and Andy Raubeson, SRO Housing Corp. of Los Angeles, September 22, 1986.

[36] Telephone interview with Gary Blasi, September 22, 1986.

[37] Id.

[38] Id.; Telephone interview with Ruth Schwartz, Shelter Partnership, September 24, 1986.

including chairs as well as beds -- in public and private shelter, and through a voucher program.

The Union Rescue Mission provides overnight emergency shelter, with a maximum capacity of 550 in chairs, 80 in beds. According to Ernest Hasper, superintendent of the mission, 800-900 people will fill all the spaces this winter, and the shelter still expects to turn away requests.

Causes

Major causes are the loss of low income housing stock, the high cost of housing, lack of jobs and income, and changes in mental health policy.[39]

Federal Response

According to Gary Blasi, of the Los Angeles Legal Aid Foundation, "the federal government's response has been invisible in California." He adds: "Homeless people are poor people -- they don't get the attention other groups do." According to Andy Raubeson, of the SRO Housing Corp. of Los Angeles, the federal government "should be doing what it had been doing for the past 50 years," it "should be the major provider of conatruction funds for providing low-income housing."

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[39] Telephone interview with Gary Blasi and Andy Raubeson, September 22, 1986.

Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Need

On any given night there are about 5,000 homeless persons -- including those living in grossly inadequate or overcrowded conditions -- in Milwaukee. Over the past year, there has been a substantial increase, with a 15 to 20% increase in homeless families and 2-3% increase in single adults. These -- and possibly larger -- increases are expected to continue this winter.[40]

According to Mary Evans, director of Family Crisis Center (CR-SDC), a total 1,830 people must be turned away by Milwaukee shelters each month.

According to Joe Volk, of Community Advocates, a "very sad statistic" is that the number of homeless persons without any income is decreasing, while the numbers of homeless persons with incomes is rising. Says Volk: "Homelessness is beginning to creep up the economic scale."

Resources

There are a total of 600 shelter beds in Milwaukee. Starting November 1, an overflow site with an additional 100 beds will open; during the 2 coldest winter months, the Red Cross will pitch in with disaster relief.[41]

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[40] Telephone interview with Joe Volk, Community Advocates, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, September 22, 1986.

[41] Id.

Causes

The high cost of housing is the primary cause of homelessness in Milwaukee. Low cost housing is scarce; according to the city housing authorities, 5000 families are currently on waiting lists for subsidized housing in Milwaukee; such lists have "at least tripled" over the past 5 years. Last year 5000 SRO units were torn down. And although Wisconsin has the sixth highest AFDC payments in the country, the AFDC check often cannot stretch to meet housing costs.[48]

Mary Evans, director of Family Crisis Center (CR-SDC), a shelter for homeless families, says she housed about 1000 families last year. Shelters are unable to meet the need. Overall, she reports, Milwaukee shelters turned away 1830 people per month. Homelessness among families in particular is on the rise -- "we're talking babies out on the street" -- and Evans expects to see more families turned away this year.

Evans says that the high cost of housing is forcing low-income families to put more and more of their resources into paying the rent. Eventually, she says, the loss of a job or the inability to stretch AFDC checks forces families to double up. A typical sequence of events, says Evans, is for the landlord to deem this a lease violation and evict the family. Unable to find a new apartment, the family joins the ranks of the homeless.

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[48] Id.

In addition, Pat Flannery, director of Guest House, a 76 bed overnight shelter, reports that a "significant group" of that shelter's population is employed, yet does not earn enough to pay for housing. Shelter guests receiving general assistance grants are also unable to make do; the average grant is $175 per month, while rooming house units average $160 per month. Even those who move out of the shelter may find themselves evicted and out on the street if a grant check arrives a few days late. While many "do try to live independently, it doesn't hold together," Flannery said.

Federal Response

According to Volk, the federal government's response is "hopeless." He says: "it's obviously a nationwide problem. It should be a partnership between federal, state and local" governments, but the federal government "doesn't want to be a partner."

New Haven, Connecticut

Need

There are 15,000 to 20,000 homeless persons statewide.** There has been an increase of about 25% over the past year, primarily "many more" homeless families, young pregnant women, persons with employable skills and persons who have recently lost their permanent housing.**

Cynthia DeLouise, director of Columbus House, a New Haven shelter, reports that over the past 4 years that shelter alone has seen 4500 different homeless individuals -- not including members of families. This September, Columbus House is already full and turning people away. DeLouise expects further increases as the supply of low cost housing continues to shrink and predicts more deaths among the homeless this coming winter.

Resources

There are fewer than 600 to 1200 shelter beds statewide.** DeLouise reports that shelter beds are filled every night in New Haven and are turning people away.

Causes

A major cause is the lack of affordable housing. DeLouise notes that New Haven is continuing to lose inexpensive

** Telephone interview with Cynthia DeLouise, Executive Director, Columbus House, 9/23/86.

** Id. Telephone interview with Judy Walter, State Department of Human Resources, 9/23/86.

** Id.

housing, and that the only remaining SRO in New Haven -- with 208 units -- may close this winter.

In addition, DeLouise notes that while the unemployment rate in Connecticut is one of the lowest in the country, jobs are available primarily for those with skills; there is a lack of training programs for unskilled persons. As a result, increasingly, in Connecticut "you're either really well off or you have nothing."

Federal Response

DeLouise states that "there's been a lack of [federal] response." The federal government should provide a "comprehensive plan" -- including job training and education. Judy Walter, of the State Department of Human Resources, adds that "the federal government has to establish homelessness as a priority."

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New Orleans

Numbers

Approximately 1,200 - 2,000 persons are now homeless in New Orleans, with an increase in homeless families over the past year.[**]

Resources

New Orleans has only 523 shelter beds; these shelters limit access by permitting homeless persons to use them only seven nights per year. In addition, most charge a fee; there are only 10% free shelter beds. There is no government funding for shelter at all.[**]

Causes

According to Vicki Judice, Program Coordinator of Catholic Charities in New Orleans, there are "enormous waiting lists for federally subsidized housing." In addition, she notes, "we're leading the nation in the rate of unemployment."

Federal Response

Says Judice, "federal funding is needed for free, small shelters with comprehensive programs."

[**] Telephone interview with Vicki Judice, Program Coordinatory, Associated Catholic Charities, September 26, 1986.

[**] Id.

New York

Need

There are now approximateiy 60,000 to 80,000 homeless persons in New York City.[**]

The past year saw an increase in number of homeless families: from 3,700 to 4,300. There are now more homeless children than single adults in the city's shelter system: 11,000 children compared to 10,000 singles.

According to David Beseda, of the New York Coalition for the Homeless, the outlook for this winter is bleak. With a projected conservative estimate of a 20% increase, the city's plan is simply to enlarge the capacity of mass shelters.

Shelters currently house about 22,000 homeless persons.[**] Although the city is under court order to shelter all homeless persons, these beds are inadequate to meet the need.

To comply with its legal obligation to shelter homeless families, the city is now spending from $2-3,000 per month to house families in squalid welfare motel rooms. These payments have recently been the subject of investigation.

[**] Interview with David Beseda, New York Coalition for the Homeless, September 23, 1986.

[**] Coalition for the Homeless et al., Stemming the Tide of Displacement at iii (1986).

Causes

The primary cause is lack of affordable housing. Cuts in federal funding have hurt housing -- section 8 housing rehabilitation money has been lost altogether.[90] According to Fred Griesbach, of the New York Coalition for the Homeless, the overall decrease in federal money over the past six years coupled with the 20% yearly increase in the homeless population has resulted in a "huge housing deficit." Griesbach expects further shrinkage in the housing market as the accumulative effects of these cuts are felt.

Federal Response

According to Griesbach, the city and state are "incapable of replacing dollar-for-dollar what the federal government has taken away." Federal policies which cut housing and benefits funds "condemn the state and local governments to an endless commitment to shelter which they cannot fulfill."

[90] Telephone interview with Fred Griesbach, New York Coalition for the Homeless, September 24, 1986.

Portland, Oregon

Need

This past year there were approximately 7,000 homeless persons in Portland, Oregon. Changes over the past year included an increase in young people, in their teens and early 20's, as well as an increase in women and families.[91]

Locally, Mayor Bud Clark has prepared a detailed plan to address the needs of the homeless; and both the state and city have taken steps to make resources available. Yet the facilities are still inadequate to meet the need.[92]

According to Michael Stoops, Director of the Burnside Community Council, poverty is the major cause of homelessness in Portland, along with a lack of affordable housing.

Federal Response

Stoops notes that with Mayor Clark's new plan, Portland has made more progress in the last 12 months than had been made in the past 10 years. Portland pioneered the purchasing of SROs, which provide for low-income housing in the metropolitan area. Nevertheless, Stoops notes that the effects of federal cuts in low income housing are now beginning to be felt. Without federal resources, state and local efforts are insufficient to address the problem.

[91] Telephone interview with Michael Stoops, Director, Burnside Community Council, 9/23/86.

[92] Id.

Providence, Rhode Island

Need

The estimated state-wide population is about 6000 -- an increase of about 50% over the past five years. The past year there has been an increase of about 25% -- primarily in the numbers of women with children as well as in the numbers of blacks.[93]

The outlook for the coming winter is "more of the same." The mayor set up a task force on homelessness last February, but nothing has come out of it so far. While "the business environment has never been better," this is not expected to result in aid to the homeless population.[94]

Resources

There are now 177 shelter beds in Providence.[95]

Causes

The causes are multiple: high housing costs coupled with low wages in the state create a situation where families are unable to afford decent housing. In addition, deinstitutionalization and the high illiteracy rate contribute to the causes of homelessness.

Federal Response

Federal cutbacks beginning in 1981 have affected the state's working poor, leading to an increase in the homeless population.[96] According to Elizabeth Morency, of the Rhode Island Protection and Advocacy System, "Ronald Reagan's response has been disastrous."

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[93] Telephone interview with Elizabeth Morency, Rhode Island Protection and Advocacy System, 9/22/86.

[94] Id.

[95] Id.

[96] Id.

Richmond, Virginia

Need

There are over 4,000 homeless persons in Richmond in any given month. There has been an increase of 10-20% over the past year, with the highest single increase being in the number of homeless families. In addition, migrant workers, hispanics, asians, and rural populations are contributing to the increasing numbers of homeless persons.[97]

Numbers are expected to continue to increase at about 10-20% this coming winter.[98]

Resources

There are now 150-200 shelter beds in Richmond; these resources are insufficient to meet the need.[99] Statewide, there are about 3,100 shelter spaces; about 750 persons are turned away each month.

Causes

The major causes are the lack of funding to provide adequate low-income housing and the high unemployment rate in Virginia.[100]

Federal Response

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[97] Telephone interview with Peggy Hombs, 9/22/86.

[98] Id.

[99] Id.

[100] Telephone interview with Peggy Hombs, 9/22/86.

The main effect of federal policies has been a decrease in available affordable housing, as well as a decrease in resources available for other social service programs serving the homeless.[*1] To the extent the federal government has responded, it has been in an emergency, "band-aid" manner. What is needed is a long-term approach, focusing on job training and affordable housing.[*2]

[*1] Id.

[*2] Id.

Seattle, Washington

Need

Seattle now has about 3,000 homeless persons on any given night.[*1] Those numbers have increased at least 10% each winter, and a similar rise is expected this winter.[**]

Ken Cole, director of the Downtown Emergency Service Center, reports that his shelter -- which has been in existence for 7 years -- has set a record each month this year. He predicts that "we're going to be in big trouble this winter."

Tina Narr, of the YWCA Shelter for women and families, reports that when the shelter first opened 8 years ago, it sheltered 300 per year and turned away 300 per year. Now, she says, the 100 beds are filled every night, and up to 300 are turned away each month. The families are larger, and the problem is "almost overwhelming." In the winter, homeless persons sleep in the lobby of the building.

According to Martha Dilts of the Seattle Emergency Housing Coalition, the Coalition's shelter last year housed 304 families and had to turn away 4,700.

Resources

Seattle has "at best" about 1,500 shelter spaces during the winter, including the emergency opening of public

[*1] Telephone interview with Martha Dilts, Seattle Emergency Housing Coalition, September 18, 1986.

[**] Id.

buildings.[**] The city government recently increased its funding for shelter by 15%, reflecting, according to Cole, a "pretty good local attempt to increases resources." In addition, Seattle received $200,000 from Hands Across America, yet the need is still far short of being met.

Causes

Major causes are "very extreme cutbacks in housing programs," according to Dilts. About 90% of the funding has been cut from such programs over the past 5 years, she says. Between 2000 to 3000 families are now on waiting lists for subsidized housing in Seattle. In addition, according to Cole, 1000 units of low rent dwellings were torn down over the past year. Cole added that unemployment -- which is "very high" -- and the lack of job training programs contribute; he noted that a local job training program was just recently forced to shut down when its federal funds were cut off.

Narr noted that high housing costs are a major problem for her shelter's population. About 40% of that shelter's population is employed, yet still cannot afford housing.

Federal Response

Dilts pointed out that Seattle is a "very creative" community but that "without the federal government it's impossible for the community to handle all of it." Cole noted that Seattle is "doing its fair share" but that it doesn't "feel like it has a partner back in D.C. any more . . . it's very ironic having a local community fighting a national problem -- we feel very isolated."

[**] Id.

St. Louis, Missouri

Need

There are currently between 10,000 to 15,000 homeless persons in St. Louis; this reflects an increase of 100% -- primarily in women with children -- over the past year.[**]

Resources

There are now 150 beds in two shelters in St. Louis. Shelter beds have been cut back this year due to lack of funding. As a result, a significant number of homeless persons are expected to be turned away. Most shelters and soup kitchens are funded privately by local church groups and through surplus food distributors.[**]

Causes

Major causes in Missouri are that welfare recipients with children are unable to afford housing or cannot retain it because they are unable to both pay the rent and other additional expenses.[**]

Federal Response

The major effect of recent federal actions felt in Missouri has been the drying up of federal Section 8 housing certificates. No new certificates have been issued in recent years; even when housing is found, certificates are not available.[**]

[**] Telephone interview with Susan Murray, St. Louis Relocation Clearinghouse, 9/22/86; 9/24/86.

[**] Id.

[**] Id.

[**] Id.

Tucson, Arizona

Need

Approximately 2-3,000 persons are now homeless in Tucson; up about 15-30% over the past year.[10] For the first time, the Salvation Army shelter was filled by August.[11]

A "substantial increase" in women and children has occurred, according to W. Mark Clark, of the Travelers' Aid Society of Tucson, with approximately 50% of the homeless population now consisting of families.

According to Clark, "we have every reason to believe it's going to get worse this winter."

Resources

Tucson provides about 165 shelter beds, including beds provided through a voucher program. Only 12 units are for families. Restrictions apply: homeless persons may stay at shelters for only three days per month, five days every two months.

Causes

According to Gordon Packard, of the Primavera Foundation, the "unavailability of low income housing, aggravated by the tearing down of a lot of cheap hotels and motels" is the leading cause of homelessness in Tucson. In addition, according

[10] Telephone interview with Gordon Packard, Primavera Foundation, September 18, 1986; telephone interview with W. Mark Clark, Travelers Aid Society of Tucson, September 22, 1986.

[11] Id.

to Packard, federal programs have created incentives to build office buildings rather than low income housing, and guidelines for federal block grants have been "stretched" to benefit such development. Packard also cited cuts in federal job training programs.

Cressworth C. Lander, of the City Department of Housing, says that no new construction of public housing has occurred this year. In the past four years, only 50 new section 8 units have been established per year, as opposed to 200 units per year previously. As a result, says Lander, the waiting list for section 8 for families has been closed for the past two years.

Federal Response

According to Packard, the federal government is "the first point of relief, the first entity that needs to respond." It has "the financial and physical resources" to provide relief. Moreover, he noted, "cutbacks in federal block grants have put cities in a tremendous bind," making them reluctant to take any but "piecemeal" actions. The federal government is "squeezing us from both sides."

For this winter, "the outlook is very grim."

Union County, New Jersey

Need

In Union County, there are upwards of 1,000 homeless people at any given time.[1] Mike Fabricant of the Elizabeth Coalition to House the Homeless reports that homelessness has "espanded incredibly" in the past several years. Fabricant says that this year "for the first time, the Coalition's summer caseload exceeded the winter caseload" and that there is "likely to be an incredible increase in homelessness this winter."

Families are an increasing proportion of the homeless. The Coalition has assisted 150 homeless families in the past 3 months alone, and it is estimated that 70% of all those assisted by the Coalition are families with minor children.

Resources

In Union County there are no state-run shelter facilities. There are a total of 70 shelter beds available from the Salvation Army, Plainfield YMCA and the "Interfaith Council" of churches which will begin operations this winter. State and local welfare agencies will place homeless people and families in motels/hotels where the client is accompanied/assisted by Coalition representatives; without assistance, they are denied help and returned to the streets. According to Fabricant, the state follows a "fault policy -- if you're homeless, it's your fault," and thus no assistance is offered.

[1] Telephone interview with Mike Fabricant, Elizabeth Coalition to House the Homeless, September 22, 1986.

New Jersey spends an average of $75 per capita in homeless assistance, "the lowest in the Northeast by far;" that figure is decreasing.

According to Fabricant, increasing numbers of homeless persons are turned away by government agencies. "Anyone who goes to county or local welfare without an advocate or representative will probably be turned away. Many state workers did not even know the existence of state statutes and funds until the Coalition went in there."

In New Jersey, homelessness is the primary cause of family separation. The state uses homelessness as the basis for forcibly separating children from their parents and placing them in foster homes. "Without adequate funds to deal with homelessness among families, the state's policy inevitably results in dissolution of the family unit," says Fabricant.

Causes

(a) AFDC grants are no longer sufficient to cover urban housing costs;

(b) scarce housing supply and the refusal of many landlords to accept children as tenants;

(c) "working poor" syndrome, where families that cannot make ends meet are evicted and end up homeless. There is "much more of this" now than in the past, according to Fabricant.

Fabricant reports that the Coalition received $10,000 from Hands Across America this summer. "It was all spent in less than two 1/2 months."

Gentrification of urban housing has had a devastating effect on homeless in urban New Jersey. The housing stock for low-income people is "under siege" in Hoboken, Jersey City and the Elizabeth marina area.

Federal Response

The federal government has offered only FEMA money, a "band-aid approach at best."

According to Fabricant: "The biggest problem is the gap between the rhetoric of politicians and the reality of the homeless. The response of government at all levels has been miniscule."

Washington, D.C.

Need

There are now about 10-15,000 homeless persons in Washington, D.C. Over the past year, there has been a large increase in women; according to Mary Ellen Hombs of the Community for Creative Non-violence, "virtually all the shelters for women are running at or above capacity."

Hombs expects a 10% increase this coming winter.

Homelessness is also on the rise in Washington's suburbs. In Montgomery County, numbers of homeless persons are estimated at 1,500; shelter spaces number 140.[13] Numbers have increased by about 15-20% -- a 20% increase is expected this winter.[14]

Resources

During the winter, there are about 1,800 shelter beds for single men and women in Washington.[15]

Causes

According to Hombs, the single most important cause of homelessness in Washington is the lack of affordable housing.

Federal cuts in housing and entitlements programs have been "devastating," says Hombs. In the early 1980's, Washington

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[13] Telephone interview with Joe Brown of Shepherd's Table, 9/24/86.

[14] Id.

[15] Telephone interview with Mary Ellen Hombs, 9/25/86.

was receiving $20 million in federal funds for housing rehabilitation; that figure has now been cut to less than $3 million.

Hombs says congressional action is needed for both emergency aid and permanent housing. In addition, she says a permanent agency -- not just a task force -- should be created to address homelessness

Analysis

The data compiled for this report present a disturbing picture of the nation's homeless poor. City after city, town after town, the report reveals a population that is demographically and geographically diverse. All parts of the country are affected: from coast to coast, homelessness now affects not only large urban centers, but also suburban communities and small towns. All segments of the population are affected: no longer limited to the stereotypical "bum" -- the white, middle-aged, single, male, alcoholic -- homelessness is now gripping growing numbers of families and children.

By all traditional criteria, homelessness is now a national crisis. Yet the federal government has taken virtually no action to address the issue: indeed, its policies have caused and continue to deepen the crisis. Perhaps most dramatic among the present Administration's deliberate indifference to the misery of the nation's homeless poor is its failure even to acknowledge it: the sole Administration response to the crisis has been to deny its very existence.

1. **Causes of Homelessness: Effects of Federal Policies**

Since 1981, the federal government has consistently adopted policies that both cause and exacerbate widespread homelessness around the country. As reflected in this report, cutbacks in federal housing and entitlements programs have literally squeezed hundreds of thousands of Americans out of their homes and onto the streets.

a. Housing Programs

The service providers surveyed in this report -- those on the front lines in serving the nation's homeless -- were virtually unanimous in citing an extreme scarcity of affordable housing as a leading cause of homelessness. This shortage is the result of deliberate policy choices:

Since 1981, federally subsidized housing programs have been cut over 69%.[76]

- In 1981, the federal government authorized over $32 billion for subsidized housing; in 1986 that number was down to under $9.5 billion.
- Each year, thousands of low-cost units are lost simply through conversion, abandonment, demolition and arson.[77]

In his budget for 1987, President Reagan proposed eliminating all new funding for subsidized housing.[78]

b. Entitlements Programs

From 1980 to 1985, the national poverty rate has risen a full percentage point: from 13% to 14%.[79] Among children, the current rate is almost double: 21% of all children -- and 24% of

[76] Low Income Housing Information Service.

[77] Hartman, et al., Displacement: How to Fight It, at 3.

[78] Low Income Housing Information Service.

[79] New York Times, August 27, 1986.

all children under six -- live in poverty.[80] Yet, federal spending on social services programs has decreased 9% since 1981.[81]

Aid to Families with Dependent children ("AFDC"). AFDC is the major federal assistance program for poor families. Yet as reflected in this report, increasing numbers of families around the country are finding themselves unable to stretch their AFDC grants to pay for both the rent and for other basic necessities. Since 1981, eligibility and payment standards have been altered three times to tighten criteria, removing large numbers of families from eligibility or reducing their benefits:

- Since 1981, these changes have resulted in a loss of over $3.6 billion from AFDC payments nationwide.[82]
- Since 1981, these changes have reduced the average monthly AFDC caseload by 442,000.[83]
- In 1984, only 55 out of every 100 poor children were receiving AFDC benefits.[84]

[80] Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, Smaller Slices of the Pie, at 4 (1985).

[81] See General Accounting Office, Homelessness: A Complex Problem and the Fedoral Response, at 23 (1985), citing Palmer Sawhill, Overview: The Reagan Record, at 13 (Urban Institute, 1984).

[82] Based on information supplied by Center on Budget and Policy Analysis.

[83] Children's Defense Fund, A Children's Defense Budget, at 144 (1986).

[84] Id.

Food Programs. Reductions and changes in federal food programs have also contributed to the increasing difficulty of poor persons to meet basic needs. These changes not only lengthen the lines at soup kitchens, they force the cruel choices between necessities -- such as food and shelter -- that lead many to the streets:

- Since 1982, $6.8 billion has been cut from the Food Stamp program, pushing one million recipients off the program and reducing benefits for 20 million.[**]
- The food stamp average benefit is now 49 cents per meal.[**]
- In 1980, the average monthly food stamp participation rate was 68% of the poverty population; in 1985, it was 58-60%.[*']
- In 1981, the food stamp outreach program was repealed. As a result, many poor persons -- including large numbers of homeless persons -- are unaware of benefits to which they are entitled and desperately need.[**]

[**] Children's Defense Fund, A Children's Defense Budget, at 182 (1986).

[**] Physicians' Task Force on Hunger in America, Harvard University School of Public Health, Hunger Counties 1986, at 9.

[*'] Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, March 4, 1986.

[**] Children's Defense Fund, A Children's Defense Budget, at 183 (1986).

Disability Benefits. In 1981, the Social Security Administration adopted a program to aggressively review the receipt of disability benefits by elderly and disabled persons. As a result:

- By 1985, 491,300 recipients had been dropped from the disability rolls. Of those elderly and disabled who were able to challenge the validity of these terminations, 200,000 were reinstated on appeal after lengthy administrative and court proceedings.[**]
- At least three cities -- New York, Columbus, and Denver -- found causal connections between the resulting loss of benefits and homelessness.[**]

c. **Failure to Support Community Mental Health Services**

Approximately 30% of the homeless population is mentally disabled.[*'] The wave of "deinstitutionalization" that occurred from 1963 to 1980 is a component of this problem; however, the failure to support deinstitutionalized persons with mental health services in the community is its direct cause:

[**] General Accounting Office, Homelessness: A Complex Problem and the Federal Response, at 23-24 (1985).

[**] Id.

[*'] Cuomo, 1933/1983: Never Again -- A Report to the National Governors' Association Task Force on the Homeless, at 41 (1983).

- From 1963 to 1980, the population of psychiatric institutions decreased from 505,000 to 138,000.**
- Of 2,000 planned federally-supported community mental health facilities, fewer than 800 actually were established.**

The Federal Response

The inevitable result of these federal policies has been the homelessness and hunger which now pervades the nation. Yet in the face of this crisis -- now visible on streets around the country -- the federal government's response has been virtually nil. It has created a single, paltry program: an emergency food and shelter operation administered by the Federal Emergency management Agency ("FEMA") and a "task force" which has neither the funding nor the authority to take any serious action.

1. The FEMA Program

Created in 1983, the FEMA program must be authorized each year; each year President Reagan proposed its elimination. Especially in comparison to the cuts in other programs, the assistance FEMA is providing is -- though desperately needed -- minimal. Since 1983, the program has provided the following aid:

FY 1983: $50 million
FY 1984: $40 million

** Id. at 41.

** General Accounting Office, Homelessness: A Complex Problem and the Federal Response, at 20 (1985).

FY 1985: $90 million
FY 1986: $70 million**

Having butchered the programs that aid the poor, the federal government seeks to solve the inevitable crisis by providing emergency food and shelter through an agency that traditionally aids victims of natural disasters. Seventy million dollars -- bitterly fought for this year and again slated for elimination by the President next year -- is the sole response to the human disaster of homelessness and hunger wrought not by floods and hurricanes, but by deliberate policy choices of an Administration that has abandoned its commitment to care for the needy.

2. The Federal Task Force

In October, 1983, then-Secretary of HHS, Margaret Heckler, created the Federal Interagency Task Force on Food and Shelter for the Homeless. The Task Force, under the segis of HHS, includes representatives from numerous federal agencies: the Department of Agriculture, Housing and Urban Development, Defense, Commerce, Interior, Labor, Transportation; the General Services Administration, FEMA, the Veteran's Administration and the Postal Service. Nevertheless, the charter of the Task Force is based on the assumption that homelessness is essentially a local problem that does not require a federal response.**

** Federal Emergency Management Agency Board; Federal Budget.

** The Federal Response to the Homeless Crisis; Hearings before the Subcommittee on Intergovernmental Relations and Human Resources, 98th Congress, 2d Session, 205 et seq. (1984).

The mandate of the Task Force is to act as a "catalyst" spurring its member federal agencies to provide services to the homeless -- including services independently required by federal statutory provisions. The following examples demonstrate its almost complete lack of efficacy in this effort:**

* The DOD is required by law to make unused military facilities available for use as shelters for the homeless; $8 million was appropriated in FY 84 to implement this program.†† According to the Task Force -- which was to facilitate the implementation of this program -- approximately 600 such facilities fell under the program in 1984. In 1986, the Task Force, which, despite our requests, has not made the list of 600 facilities available to the National Coalition for the Homeless -- reported that only six of those facilities have actually been used to provide shelter.‡‡

* The VA is required by law to conduct outreach activities to inform veterans of benefits programs.§§ Although the VA is a member of the

** Id.

†† 10 U.S.C. 2546.

‡‡ General Accounting Office, Homelessness: A Complex Problem and the Federal Response, at 36.

§§ 38 U.S.C. § 241 et seq.

Task Force, no national VA outreach program exists for homeless veterans. yet approximately 30% of the adult homeless population consists of veterans.¶¶

* The Social Security Administration -- part of HHS, the Task Force Coordinator -- has specifically acknowledged that many homeless persons are eligible for, but not receiving, benefits under the Social Security Act.*** Yet, the sole effort the SSA has made to reach such homeless persons is to instruct its field offices to update their referral files to include shelters, to "coordinate" with local groups concerned with the homeless, and to "heighten" their employees' awareness of homelessness.†††

Recommendations

The National Coalition for the Homeless urges the adoption by the federal government of a three-part program to address homelessness: First, emergency relief to ease the immediate suffering of the nation's homeless men, women and

¶¶See National Coalition for the Homeless, Testimony before the Subcommittee on Education and Training, House Committee on Veteran's Affairs, September 10, 1986.

***U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and Social Security Administration, Social Security Information Items, at 1 (November, 1986).

†††Id.

children. Second, preventive measures to stem the increasing tide of homelessness. Third, long-term solutions to address the underlying causes of homelessness.

This program is embodied in a comprehensive piece of legislation developed by the National Coalition for the Homeless together with ten other national organizations with expertise in related areas. That proposal -- the Homeless Persons' Survival Act (H.R. 5140 and S. 2608) -- was introduced in the House and Senate by Representative Leland and Senator Gore last June and is now supported by over 60 co-sponsors and endorsed by over 60 organizations. Highlights of the bill are:

Emergency Relief

- Establish a national right to shelter to provide the bare essential of emergency shelter to all homeless persons in all states.
- Provide effective outreach to homeless persons eligible for Food Stamp and SSI benefits.
- Permit use of Food Stamps by homeless persons to buy prepared meals.
- Provide health and mental health care to homeless persons.
- Remove barriers to education for homeless children.
- Prohibit the imposition of permanent address requirements for receipt of benefits.

Preventive Measures

- Prevent unnecessary evictions for subsidized housing.
- Provide temporary rental assistance to avert evictions and foreclosures in private housing.
- Preserve low-rent units such as SROs.
- Provide pre-release procedures for SSI and Food Stamp benefits.
- Extend SSI presumptive disability to persons suffering from severe mental illness.

Long-Term Solutions

- Increase section 8 and public housing units.
- Require local governments receiving federal funds to make vacant, tax-foreclosed building available to house the homeless.
- Encourage development of community-based residences for the homeless mentally ill.

Conclusion

Recent federal policy decisions have directly caused and exacerbated the widespread homelessness that is evident on streets and in the shelters across America today. Indeed, homelessness is the most visible -- and most desperate -- symbol of those policies and the devastation they have wrought on the nation's neediest. Without a dramatic change in those policies -- without serious, responsible federal action -- the crisis is certain to worsen and toll in human misery and social cost will climb.

Senator CRANSTON. Thank you very, very much.

Senator D'AMATO. Mr. Chairman.

Senator CRANSTON. Senator D'Amato would like to make a statement.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR ALFONSE D'AMATO

Senator D'AMATO. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for your leadership in this area and I look forward to working with you and the committee in attempting to provide some of the leadership that is necessary legislatively to deal with our housing problems and the problems of the homeless in America.

You have called this hearing at a very timely and opportune time. As you know, the Appropriations Committee just this morning—that's one of the reasons I'm late—did have a markup in full committee and did appropriate the $50 million for the program and I think that's an important first step.

Mr. Chairman, I have another committee at the same time, but I would like to leave you with two things. No. 1, a statement as if read in its entirety and, second, a commitment to work with you in this area.

There is no one more compassionate and understanding of the problems of the homeless and who has the legislative inclinations and ability to help make a difference than our chairman, Senator Cranston, and I look forward to working with him.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR ALFONSE D'AMATO

Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to join with you and members of the Housing Subcommittee to discuss this most pressing problem facing our Nation. The 100th Congress must address the needs of the homeless and I am pleased that this subcommittee has taken the lead in examining the scope, causes, and the possible solutions to this problem. I would, also, like to commend the fine participants of this hearing for taking the time to share with us their comments and experiences concerning the plight of homeless families and individuals.

Since 1983, Congress has provided assistance for many local food and shelter programs through emergency appropriations under FEMA's Emergency Food and Shelter Program. In addition, in last year's continuing resolution, H.J. Res. 738, Congress agreed to appropriate $15 million to the Department of Housing and Urban Development to carry out two new programs for the homeless: the Emergency Shelter Grants program and the Transitional Housing Demonstration program. These programs are essential first steps in meeting the nutritional and housing needs of our most impoverished citizens. As a member of the Appropriations Committee, I've strongly supported these programs.

However, rather than continuing this patchwork approach to solving a national problem, we must develop a comprehensive, well-coordinated program for the homeless. A formal program will provide stability and certainty to the cities, towns and charitable organizations that provide services to the homeless.

S. 258, which I introduced on January 6, would create a long-term Federal program of emergency food and shelter assistance, and transitional housing and supportive services, through the coordinated efforts of the U.S. Departments of Housing and Urban Development, Agriculture, and Health and Human Services, as well as through FEMA. During the 99th Congress, I worked with many of my colleagues on the Housing Subcommittee to develop this program so that local providers will not have to wonder whether there's going to be assistance each year, and it is my hope that the 100th Congress will move expeditiously to enact such a program for America's homeless.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. TALISMAN. Senator, I wonder if I could just say that Senator D'Amato deserves special credit, as you know, because he was one

of the original cosponsors of the original act which created all of this and was very helpful.

Senator CRANSTON. Thank you, Senator D'Amato. We'll be working together.

STATEMENT OF REV. J. BRYAN HEHIR, SECRETARY, DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND WORLD PEACE, U.S. CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

Reverend HEHIR. Mr. Chairman, I represent the U.S. Catholic Conference of Bishops, the national organization of the Catholic Bishops of the United States, and I was asked to testify because of the Bishops' pastoral letter on the economy which deals with housing as one of the questions and, second, because of the church's involvement in the housing question throughout the United States.

Precisely because that involvement is at the local level, I would need to solicit from that level the specific information you asked about, about the interaction with FEMA. I am not in a position to give that to you right off the top of my head, but I would be glad to provide any information that I can.

What I would do in the brief time available to me is say three things. First, something about the perspective of this testimony; second, a word on the problem; and third, some policy recommendations.

The perspective the Catholic Conference of Bishops brings to this question of housing and the homeless is the perspective expressed in the pastoral letter on economic justice for all. That letter begins by saying we really need to ask three questions about the economy: what the economy does for people, what it does to people, and how it allows them to participate in the economic life of the Nation.

PERSPECTIVE OF THE DIGNITY OF THE HUMAN PERSON

The reason why those three questions are important is that they give one an opportunity to evaluate economic policy, whether it be housing policy, job policy or health policy, from one single perspective. And that is the perspective of the dignity of the human person.

The person is the clearest reflection of the presence of God among us and because of that the person is the most precious entity this Nation has. When one tries to evaluate the national budget, the housing programs of the country, or the economic policy of the country in light of the dignity of the human person, one comes to it from a different angle of vision; not to contradict the empirical data but simply to fill the empirical data with the sense of meaning.

If the person is the clearest presence of God among us, then persons need to be protected. The way we protect persons in a society is that we surround them with a set of moral claims, claims that a person can make not because he or she has certain talent, certain color, or comes from a certain place. We say the person has dignity and every person can make certain minimal claims on a society in order that that dignity not be ravaged and desecrated. Those moral claims include rights to minimum food, housing, and health care if the dignity of the human person is not to be ravaged.

When one looks at the problem of the homelessness today, one faces clearly a national policy crisis, an enormous embarrassment, but one faces the desecration of the dignity of the human person, for not to be sheltered from the ravages of the environment is to cut deeply into the dignity of every person. It is a perspective one brings to this question.

The nature of the problem intensifies what we understand by desecration. It seems to me two characteristics about the way the problem is defined illustrate the enormous importance of the hearings you are holding and your own commitment to this over a long period of time.

First of all, as far as I can tell—and I bring much less expertise to this than many of the witnesses you've had here today—the first characteristic of the description of the problem we face is it's hard to define the problem.

People estimate the number of homeless in the country, as I understand it, from 350,000—the HUD estimate—up through 3 million, and it seems to me simply the inability to define the problem illustrates the depth of the crisis.

Then there is the question of the nature of the homeless. To write the history of this problem over the last 10 years is to look at the logic of an escalating crisis. We begin by saying it is because there are more mentally ill deinstitutionalized and then we find single individuals who are not mentally ill who are without housing, and then we find single parent families who are without housing and are neither mentally ill nor by themselves. Now we've found two-parent families who are unemployed and without housing.

Finally, I take it we have now found two-parent families, one or both of whom are working, and they are without housing.

The logic of that crisis is that the scope of the problem consumes the dignity of the person from the mentally ill to what we understand to be an average American family.

It does seem to me the conclusion one draws from that is that one cannot find as a root cause of this problem personal failures. There is a problem institutionally with the question of the homeless. That problem, it seems to me, must look at two major questions, at least as far as the Government is concerned. First, the inadequacy of the Federal housing policy and, second, the increasing fact of poverty in the country.

It is clear, it seems to me, that the marketplace won't provide adequate and affordable housing for everyone and, therefore, the nature of the Government's response is absolutely crucial. Other people have indicated what has happened to Federal funding for housing in this decade. I won't repeat it. I simply say that in a problem of this dimension there is no way that the private sector is going to respond in the way that the response needs to be clear.

Second, the Government policy is wider than housing. With 33 million poor, we have done things in this decade that don't help the poor to find housing. The real value of the minimum wage has been allowed to slip. We have withdrawn from the rolls of welfare, the elderly, and food stamps people who are now in the shelters. So now we have a series of questions that go beyond the homeless to the fact of poverty.

What about responses to the problem? Churches, as I understand it, are involved in two ways. One, providing shelters for the homeless; and two, in the past the churches have been able to participate in providing and helping the housing supply. There is in my testimony a description of what Catholics and others do around the country. It is not a Catholic contribution by any means, but from Minneapolis to Washington to New York there are a series of ways of opening churches and providing church facilities to try and meet the immediate crisis.

But there was a second way in which churches were involved. Churches have been involved in helping to provide the public supply of housing by joining with the Government in public-private initiatives. That's what is no longer possible because there's no more money.

So what we would hope is, that in approaching this problem, there would be a new discussion about the role of the public and private sector. For clearly, you don't want the Government to do everything, but the essential problem we face is that as private agencies we cannot get off the ground if we don't have the seed money. That seed money is now gone and it hurts us both in providing immediate shelter for the homeless and in providing some contribution from the private sector contribution to the supply of housing in the country.

My specific policy recommendations are in the testimony and I don't want to exceed my time. Thank you.

[The complete prepared statement of Rev. J. Bryan Hehir follows:]

Testimony on Homelessness

presented by

Rev. J. Bryan Hehir

Secretary for Social Development and World Peace

United States Catholic Conference

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee:

I am Fr. Bryan Hehir, Secretary for the Department of Social Development and World Peace at the United States Catholic Conference. I welcome this opportunity to speak about the growing tragedy of homelessness in our midst. I am here to emphasize our conviction that decent and affordable housing for every man, woman and child is a basic human right, one that flows from the dignity of the human person. That principle implies a mandate for each one of us and for society as a whole - a mandate to ensure that in the richest nation on earth, no one should go without adequate shelter.

Before addressing the issue of homelessness itself, I want to briefly comment on the ethical framework that forms the basis for the Catholic Church's involvement in economic and social issues. That ethical vision is spelled out in the Catholic Bishops' recent pastoral letter, Economic Justice for All. The opening lines of that document read as follows:

> Every perspective on economic life that is human, moral, and Christian must be shaped by three questions: What does the economy do for people? What does it do to people? And how do people participate in it?

These questions set the general context for my remarks here today. I want to address the question of how moral perspectives can shed light on policy choices in the area of homelessness and housing. How do normative questions of value and human purpose intersect with economic decisions in these areas? In short, how can we join the moral and the technical?

As a basis for this discussion, let me briefly comment on the ethical framework that is embodied in our pastoral letter. In line with the Roman Catholic conviction that Christian faith and reasoned reflection on human experience are complementary, not contradictory, the pastoral letter addresses its ethical arguments both to Roman Catholics and to the public at large. The structure of this argument rests on several key principles:

- The dignity of the human person is the criterion against which every economic decision, policy, and institution must be measured.
- Because human dignity can be realized and protected only in community, all people have a right to participate in the economic life of society. Thus, economic policies must be evaluated in light of the ways they include or exclude people from sharing in the economic life of the nation.
- Human rights are the minimum conditions for life in community. These rights include not only civil and political rights, but also economic rights. All people have a right to the basic necessities of life such as food, housing, medical care, education, and employment.
- All members of society have a special obligation to the poor and the vulnerable. Indeed one of the most fundamental tests for the justice or injustice of economic choices and policies is the impact they have on the poor.

These principles shape the moral vision of our entire pastoral letter. However, they do not lead directly to conclusions about policy. The move from moral principle to policy must be mediated by careful empirical analysis of the issues, by a sustained effort to understand the causes of the problems, and by prudent efforts to assess the real

consequences of proposed policy steps. These basic moral perspectives do, however, provide a distinctive point of entry into the empirical discussion. They provide a particular angle of vision for the assessment of appropriate responses to economic and social problems. With this moral framework as background, let me move to the specific issues at hand.

HOMELESSNESS -- THE PROBLEM

One of the most disturbing signs of our present economy is the massive and growing number of homeless people in our nation. Estimates range from 350,000 people by HUD to 3,000,000 people by the National Coalition on Homelessness. Recent press reports describe a 1,000% increase in homelessness since 1979 -- from 200,000 to over two million. Whatever the precise number actually is, it is clear that the problem is very extensive and growing worse, especially in the nation's major cities. The governments of New York and Los Angeles, for example, estimate nearly 50,000 homeless people in each city. The City of New York, through their network of shelters, has actually documented 5,000 homeless families. This is up from a documented 700 families in 1982. Most of these people are housed in conditions of open barracks and shared facilities. In one facility, the Holland Hotel, 250 rooms house 250 families including 900 children. This evidence from New York City's experiences suggests an increase of 250% in family homelessness in only four years. At the national level, the Government Accounting Office estimates the growth in homelessness to be 38% per year.

How can the richest nation on earth tolerate such widespread and growing homelessness? Our moral values suggest that the poor, the homeless and the hungry ought to have first claim on our common resources. We cannot permit their needs to wait until other more organized and powerful interests have been satisfied. The price is just too high in both moral and human terms.

CAUSES OF HOMELESSNESS

Mr. Chairman, we can no longer fool ourselves about the nature of the homelessness crisis in this country. Five years ago the mass media and witnesses before Congressional committees could argue that the main problem was the untreated mental illness of deinstitutionalized patients who were not able to manage in the community. Some called for a return to state mental institutions as a solution for homelessness. Soon after, the surge in homelessness among young single men was attributed largely to alcohol and drug abuse, and their situation was viewed as self-inflicted. Then came the huge growth in homelessness among single-parent families on welfare who were described as too young or ill-educated to manage their lives.

Next we began to get alarming reports of homelessness among two-parent families whose principal wage earners were unemployed. Many of these families were ineligible for both unemployment insurance and welfare benefits and found themselves on the streets when prolonged unemployment exhausted their savings. People became uneasy at the thought that the safety net wasn't working. Today we are seeing a significant increase in a newer segment of the homeless population: families with children and one or both parents who are employed. Now it is becoming clearer that homelessness is not primarily caused by personal failures but by institutional failures.

The problem has hit a part of the population whose plight cannot be attributed to mental illness, substance abuse, teen-age pregnancy, laziness or irresponsibility. Perhaps our society can begin to respond to the institutional deficiencies that are the real causes of homelessness. I am not suggesting that many of the homeless do not have personal problems that handicap them in the competition for affordable housing. I am suggesting that we have had a massive increase in homelessness in the last ten years, and that increase cannot be attributed solely to personal failures.

If these are not the real causes of homelessness, what are the explanations? Without attempting to give a comprehensive or definitive answer to this complex

question, let me comment on two points: (1) the inadequacy of federal housing policy, and (2) the dramatic growth in poverty.

First, while it may seem obvious, the point needs to be emphasized that homelessness is due in large part to the inadequate supply of low-cost housing in the nation. The empirical evidence and the practical experience of the last thirty years make it very clear that the marketplace itself does not and will not provide adequate and affordable housing for the poor. It is essential, therefore, that government policy initiatives be undertaken to ensure decent shelter for all Americans. As this Committee is well aware, that was the declared goal of our nation's housing policy as long ago as 1949 -- "A decent home in suitable living environment for every American family." (The Housing Act of 1949). This should remain our goal.

However, it is clear that the federal government has failed badly in achieving this goal, particularly with respect to low-income housing. Twelve years ago the Catholic bishops called attention to the serious housing problems confronting one in five U. S. families and the urgent need for federal support for construction and rehabilitation of low-cost housing. It was clear even then in 1975 that demographic changes, the trend toward gentrification and other factors would put a terrible squeeze on the supply of low-income housing. It was clear that the federal government had to take strong action to ensure adequate construction of housing for the poor.

Unfortunately the record shows that the government's provision of leadership and funding in this area has been woefully inadequate. As bad as the problem was a decade ago, it is much more severe today. In recent years, federal policy on low-income housing has been going in reverse. We are witnessing what appears to be a gradual abandonment of federal support for low-income housing.

In fiscal year 1981, the Congress appropriated $30.8 billion of President Carter's $33.5 billion request for housing programs. For fiscal year 1987, however, Congress appropriated only $7.8 billion, ignoring President Reagan's insistence that $2.3 billion

would be sufficient. That is a 75% reduction in housing aid. Such cuts will almost certainly make the homelessness problem worse in the future. In the face of massive evidence of the present levels of homelessness and the growing need for housing for the poor, this kind of wholesale abdication of responsibility must not be tolerated.

So, one cause of homelessness has been the failure of public policy to ensure an adequate supply of low-cost housing. Another cause has been the increase in poverty, especially among families with children. As the bishops described in their pastoral letter, we now have record levels of unemployment in non-recession years. Even among the employed, families have dropped out of the middle class as low-paid service industry jobs replaced well-paid manufacturing jobs. Mr. Chairman, as you know, the Joint Economic Committee has recently documented this erosion of the middle class and polarizatin of our society.

In the face of lower wages, higher unemployment and greater poverty, the federal government's response has been counterproductive. They have permitted the real value of the minimum wage to drop by more than 25%. They have withdrawn unemployment insurance and welfare and food stamp benefits from people who would have been eligible for aid five or ten years ago. Less than one in three unemployed workers now collects unemployment insurance. Working parents with incomes well below the poverty level are no longer eligible for supplemental welfare help or subsidized child care. Federal policy also permits half of the states to deny all welfare aid to two-parent families with unemployed breadwinners. Is it any wonder that shelters are full of families with children?

RESPONDING TO THE PROBLEM

How are we to respond to the problem of homelessness? First of all, I would emphasize that all of society has a responsibility to help solve the problem. For its part the Catholic Church across the country has intensified its efforts in recent years to aid the homeless. From Los Angeles to New York, from St. Paul to New Orleans, and here in the nation's capital as well, Church programs are serving people who have fallen through the gaping holes of government assistance programs. In many instances people who are overwhelming our emergency shelters are low-income families and individuals who have become homeless because they cannot find a place to live. Among them are single-parent families, large families, the handicapped, the elderly. Many of the homeless are from ethnic and racial minority groups. Not only are their incomes inadequate to meet the costs of housing, but there is such a severe shortage of housing opportunities that for many the quest for a home has become almost hopeless. In the face of a waiting list for public housing that is years long, our Catholic Charities agencies do not know what to say to families that are sitting in their waiting rooms. There is no place to refer them. There is no place for them to go.

In metropolitan St. Paul-Minneapolis, where the Metro Council's Report on Homelessness estimated 40,000 people, including families, single persons and the structurally unemployed who cannot find shelter, Church groups provide temporary housing for hundreds of homeless people. In St. Paul funding comes from a cooperative effort of city, county and corporate contributions. Many Church shelters use only their own resources to provide a warm place to sleep. Catholic Charities in these cities, fearing that the problem of homelessness will become permanent, have built transitional housing and developed counseling programs. In St. Paul they have developed a special residence for single men over 55 years of age who have no hope until Social Security can provide them with a minimal subsistence allowance.

I have already mentioned the problem found in New York City. There, the Catholic Archdiocese has 45 churches providing shelter for homeless people (more than 450 beds), 16 short-term residential facilities (75 beds) and 5 long-term residences (350 beds). And more are in the planning stages.

Here in metropolitan Washington, D. C., Catholic Charities has 125 beds in the city, and 40 beds in Montgomery County. They will soon open 48 beds in Prince Georges County. Since some of these emergency shelters are available only in the winter months, Catholic Charities has moved to create a Housing Development Corporation to address more long-term needs. The new Housing Development Corporation, in cooperation with Prince Georges County will soon be making housing available in Chillum, Maryland.

In these and many other localities the religious and voluntary communities are responding to the need, in some cases by means of creative partnerships among non-profit organizations, and the private and public sectors. In the end, however, the private voluntary sector does not have adequate resources to deal with these problems alone.

It is important that the government strengthen efforts of the private sector. Government can harness the commitment, the flexibility and the cost-effectiveness of the voluntary agencies to meet pressing public needs. We simply cannot do it by ourselves. And to ask us to do it alone is to ignore both history and reality. We do not have the resources nor the sole responsibility to meet these needs. Our efforts cannot and should not substitute for just and effective public policies and adequate resources to protect the human dignity and human rights of all of us — especially the most vulnerable. Beyond emergency and stop-gap measures, we urge the Congress and the Administration to turn to the fundamental task of finding ways to meet the housing needs of the poor.

We believe, Mr. Chairman, that a three-pronged attack is necessary to address the issue of homelessness. First, we have to get money out quickly to states, municipalities and non-profit agencies to provide short-term housing and services for the homeless. Yesterday the House approved a shift of $50 million for that purpose in this fiscal year.

and there appears to be considerable support for a bipartisan bill that would provide $500 million next year for that purpose. That would be a start, but only a start.

Senator Moynihan and Rep. Schumer have introduced a sensible bill that would permit states and localities to use federal funds under the AFDC-Emergency Assistance program, currently used to house homeless families in outrageously over-priced and inadequate "welfare hotels," to construct and rehabilitate permanent housing for families eligible for welfare who would otherwise be homeless. Under the terms of the Moynihan-Schumer proposal, state and local governments would pay most of the costs of the permanent housing; the federal government would get much more for its money and would achieve long-term savings as well. Homeless families would get out of shelters and into real homes.

Rep. Leland and others have also introduced a series of bills to ensure that homeless people are not denied the federal assistance which they desperately need under the AFDC, SSI, and Food Stamp programs. Federal restrictions on aid to people in shelters were originally designed to protect the Treasury from subsidizing state mental institutions. Today they are used to deny cash and food assistance to homeless people whose income consists solely of the fees paid on their behalf for cots in shelters and beds in welfare hotels.

These emergency reforms are needed, Mr. Chairman, to house today's homeless. But $560 million in emergency help and even Senator Moynihan's and Mr. Leland's proposals will get only a few of today's homeless out of shelters and into permanent housing. What about tomorrow's homeless? The families of auto and steel workers losing their jobs all over the country? The families who are being squeezed out of low-cost housing by developers seeking to make big profits by rehabbing units for middle income renters and buyers? The low-income families whose rent will go up $50 per month on the first of the month but whose wages won't increase at all?

Secondly, the federal government needs to move now on a major new initiative to increase the supply of low-cost housing. The small voucher program that has been proposed would do little to increase the supply but would simply help a few of the poor to compete for available units.

We need a crash effort by the federal government to increase the availability of low-cost housing through new construction and rehabilitation projects. A flexible program is needed that will permit localities to determine their needs for a mix of new public housing, home ownership opportunities for low-income families, rehabilitation of existing units and "in-rem" buildings and housing management programs by private non-profit groups.

Finally, in the long term we need a coordinated effort to increase the incomes of poor families. For example, we believe that the Congress should increase the minimum wage, create jobs programs, reform the welfare system and improve the unemployment insurance system to protect family incomes while unemployed workers train or retrain for available jobs.

In the end, Mr. Chairman, we must begin with the conviction that our country is rich enough to house its people -- not in church basements, armories, and flea-bag hotels -- but in decent homes. Only the federal government is adequately equipped to mount the attack. I urge you to take the lead in fashioning an effective and lasting response to this most pressing need.

Senator CRANSTON. Thank you very, very much. I appreciate very much your statement and all you have brought to the committee today.

Do any of you have any suggestions for improvements in the Foley-McKinney bill that was introduced in the House? That will be one of the things we will be considering here in the Senate.

Mr. TALISMAN. One of the major problems that we face at FEMA is that there's a hiatus for 3 months in funding cycles by Congress. Then we get the money out as fast as we can but there's this blank period of time in which there is no money. So on the emergency side, that's a terrific problem.

The second problem from my standpoint is dealing with mentally disabled people. Deinstitutionalization occurred exactly the way everyone wanted it to and the promised Community-Based Mental Health Program did not. Now we are dealing with that dilemma and trying to deal with it as a housing problem.

It is not a housing problem and never will be. And unless you separate this tragic problem in whatever bill is developed, then we're going to be dealing with this forever and not really solving the problem in a meaningful way. So that's part of the dilemma.

Senator CRANSTON. Ms. Foscarinis said that the $50 million is a drop in the bucket but the $500 million is not really adequate. We have, of course, the questions of what can be made available, given the deficit, given the expected attitude of the administration on this subject.

Have you made any careful estimates, any of you, as to what is required or what sum would really enable us to effectively cope with the human problem that we are faced with?

Ms. FOSCARINIS. I guess as I said in my testimony, we have come up, together with other organizations, with the Homeless Persons Survival Act which is that comprehensive, long-term proposal that gets at not just the symptoms but the causes.

Senator CRANSTON. The Leland-Gore bill?

LELAND-GORE BILL

Ms. FOSCARINIS. That's the Leland-Gore bill. That's a more expensive bill. We estimate it will cost about $4 billion, but I have to emphasize that if we are really serious about doing something about this problem we have to spend the money. The human reasons for spending that money are obvious, but there are also, I think, economic reasons for spending it as well. No one can dispute that emergency measures are more costly in terms of dollars than long-term solutions ultimately will be.

Providing families with shelter, as some cities now do, in welfare hotels for $3,000 a month is much, much more expensive than providing subsidized housing. So both in terms of human costs and in terms of just simple financial calculations, it makes sense to adopt that kind of comprehensive long-range approach.

Mr. TALISMAN. The Foley-McKinney bill that you're considering is for emergency purposes alone and it would be useful I think if staff or GAO could do an accounting, which we don't have the capability of doing, of exactly what the States and localities are doing

now by using various devices like revenue bonds and other kinds of devices to expand existing service.

New York State, for example, is doing a great deal on its own and still is behind the curve. I would suggest that if there were a fast way for GAO to assist or some mechanism like GAO to determine what the gross figures are of State, local, and Federal, then I would think that we would be able to take a look at other kinds of financing mechanisms to take care of the largest part of the problem which is long-term care—that is, long-term housing of all sorts of kinds to meet these various problems because it is a multibillion dollar problem.

Senator CRANSTON. If you can submit, Mark, any suggestions in writing on the steps you think should be taken, I would appreciate it.

Mr. TALISMAN. I would be glad to.

[The following information was subsequently supplied for the record:]

Submitted to Senator Cranston

As per his request on page 112-113 of Subcommittee Hearings on January 29, 1987

Suggestions to Improve Emergency Housingfor the Homeless Legislation:

1. Does your subcommittee really endorse the setaside of only 1300 Section 8 Rental Subsidy Certificates for the whole country at a cost of $100 million? Is it not wiser to increase the renovation money available to communities thus to create a greater number of temporary shelters for the homeless? How can anyone rationally distribute equitably only 1300 precious Section 8's in this vast country?

2. We must in this legislation address the issue of making surplus government property from the Department of Defense available immediately to participant agencies in the FEMA (Federal Emergency Food and Shelter Program) state by state. Such release of non-realestate surplus properties cannot now be given to local FEMA Boards or to local private voluntary agencies Clothing, cots, fixtures, equipment for cooking, and a host of other items are there and and locked up. Defense must be authorized to release these items, provide for a computer tap-in to determine what is available, and then make them easily accessible so that these local philanthropic groups do not go broke trying to get at these goods. (remember, agriculture department make surplus foods available but then required to the groups to drive hundreds of miles or more to gein access thus rendering that program a sham until correcte-d in subsequent legislation.

3. The next suggestion is not meant frivolously---Congress ordered the deinstitutionalization of millions of Americans from Mental Institutions by 1980 and then legislated the Community Mental Health Program. As it was to have been implemented, in 1980, the Gramm-Latta Act prevented any the funding passed from Congress from ever being spent---and now there are 25 percent of our homeless on be streets of American are the direct result of this horrible history. Remedy: Fund the Community Mental Health Program NOW!

4. Housekeeping in this bill:
   A. Raise the allowable overhead from 2% to 5%. Agencies are literally going broke now trying to serve the FEMA program. By giving a cap of 5% that will be giving these groups exactly one half of what they should be given according to any study that has been done of this program.
   B. Fund the program year-round on a more regularized basis so that there is not a hiatus of three months with no no money available and with no ability of the local groups to plan when their new funding might arrive!
   C. Allow medicaid funds to be used for medication and medical referral from shelters so that this precious modest amount, relatively, emergency food and shelter money is not "dissipated" by demands which are in turn very serious and even life-threatening and should be be treated----but from more relevant program funds like Medicaid.

D. Allow funds not expended at the conclusion of the program and Fiscal year to be rolled-over and not returned automatically to the Treasury and lost to the benefit of the homeless and hungry. Money now recouped through audit, or where jurisdictions find they cannot expend the money in the time-frame allowed, are forced to return the funds and we then must return them to the treasury. Language allowing the simple roll-over to other programs in need in the country will rectify this sad situation.

INCREAS THE AVAILABLE FUNDS FOR RENOVATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF SHELTER SPACE AS A TOP PRIORITY.

E. This committee must deal with HUD and the Justice Department in regard to their insistence that funding for shelter renovation be prohibited outright where such proprties are religiously owned. They are concerned that such improved properties not revert to a religiously owned body after having been improved. SOLUTION: establish in this bill a line for depreciation based upon use, which if, after not being so used, and should the property thus revert to such religious body, they would then have the basis for payment to the government for such depreciated improvements to their property.

Senator CRANSTON. I want to let all of you know that Senators may submit some questions to you in writing to supplement what we've done today.

I thank all of you very much for your presence and for your contributions.

We will now call the fourth panel. The members of this panel representing the administration's views on this problem are Dr. Harvey Vieth, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Chairman of the Federal Interagency Task Force on Food and Shelter; James Stimpson, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy Development, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development; and Steve Kleiman, U.S. Department of Defense.

I welcome all of you here. I'd like to ask if you would try to adhere to the 5-minute rule because we are sort of running out of time and if you can in your summary statements—as you know, your full statement will go in the record—please touch upon what you think we can expect from the administration in terms of the level of support for the effort to meet this need, I'd be very grateful for whatever information you could give us on that front.

Who wants to proceed first?

STATEMENT OF HARVEY VIETH, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, CHAIRMAN, FEDERAL INTERAGENCY TASK FORCE ON FOOD AND SHELTER

Mr. VIETH. Mr. Chairman, I will begin. I am Dr. Vieth, Chairman of the Federal Task Force on the Homeless.

I want to thank you for having this opportunity to testify today. I've been here since the beginning of the meeting, and you've heard a lot of figures and a lot of people on where they are coming from.

I would like to quickly tell you where I have been for the last 3 years. I have been to every major city, practically, looking at the homeless. I have talked with people in the streets. I've talked to them in cardboard boxes under the Brooklyn Bridge. I had a man die in front of me in Los Angeles. And before I came here, I was a local elected official. I had some experience there. For 20 years I was a health professional.

So I do have a sensitivity to the problem. I also think that we have some areas that we should look at, and as I have been thinking about this over the last 3 years, I am trying to figure out, first of all, who these people are. Second of all, who is responsible and how it is going to be solved.

400,000 PEOPLE DEINSTITUTIONALIZED

The first thing that comes to mind is deinstitutionalization. Historically, it has been a State responsibility to care for the mentally ill. We have experience knowing that we've got some 400,000 people, if you subtract the figures they're talking about, that could potentially be homeless, because they have been deinstitutionalized.

Now, where they had community mental health support, it worked elsewhere. The dollars did not follow. That's been discussed. Some places we know the population in institutions has

been cut 70 percent, and at the same time, some budgets have gone up 50 percent. So I think that is an area to focus on. We should look at the homeless as problems within the homeless, and we have the mental health area, where at least from one-third to two-thirds of the homeless are mentally ill.

The next thing that I saw happening is that housing has become a serious problem. The kinds of housing that many of these people were living in are called single-room occupancy hotel units, where they would live in one room, with a shower down the hall. And maybe it is not the way we want to live, but there were a lot of these facilities around.

In the last 10 years, Senator, we have lost 1 million units. That represents half, half the total in the United States. That is a lot of housing, low, low-cost housing. I am not saying we want to live that way, but it was available. These people were not in the streets.

So we are going through gentrification and we are going through urban renewal within the cities. We have been increasing the tax base within those cities, and at the same time been putting up high rises, condominiums. At the same time, people, have become homeless, and been pushed out.

So you have deinstitutionalization of States. You have cities in which you have had a cleaning up of the downtowns. All of this is good. Increased tax base, increased employment.

So there's two responsibilities, and yes, the Federal Government does have a responsibility. And all working together, I think that we can do something, and we are working on it in the Federal task force.

So I would like to talk about the Federal task force. It was established 3 years ago by the Secretary of Health and Human Services to coordinate Federal activities to serve the homeless. It has 15 major agencies. I am the Chairman. HUD, Jim Stimpson next to me is the Vice Chairman. We sit down and we try to identify what it is, first of all, that any one of these agencies is doing, what they can do administratively, and then what it would take to do other things.

I won't go through the whole list, because it is in the testimony. Basically, we have about five things that we do. We feel homelessness is essentially a problem handled best at the local level. The problem surfaces at the community level, and as such, efforts to resolve it must be focused at that level.

Senator CRANSTON. Handled by whom at the local level?

Mr. VIETH. OK. It should be handled by the local government, and it should be handled by the private sector. Now, 96 percent of the present shelters—96 percent are not Government agencies. Now let me say this. You've got my testimony, so you can read that, if you want to ask questions, maybe that is a better way to do it.

When I was a county commissioner in Colorado Springs, we had a shelter that was run by the Government, and it was a good shelter, and we were sued, because we weren't treating everyone equally. And we shouldn't, because humanistically, we had some people who were young, healthy. They'd come in, spend the night, and we'd say they would have to be on their way. We'd have a pregnant lady, who is sick. We'd keep her there for 2 months. We were

sued. Everyone had to be treated equally, because it was taxpayers' money. We passed an ordinance. They were in 48 hours. No one could stay any longer. Since then that shelter has been razed and other means of taking care of the homeless have resulted.

I am not saying that we shouldn't participate. But I think that the local governments have to be the place that it starts.

The other problem is what I refer to as "NIMBY"—not in my backyard.

There is money right now—in fact, in California, there is some money right now that can't be spent, because no one will sell them land, when they find out a shelter is going to be there. We have had some experience in California and other places like that.

My feeling is—do you want to ask me another question or——

Senator CRANSTON. No. Please continue.

Mr. VIETH. My feeling is that we have identified some 70 different programs in the Federal Government that can be used in some way, and some of them totally could be used to help the homeless. Now one of the reasons that we wanted block grants and the flexibility is so that you could set the priority at the local level. This is clearly a priority that has developed in the last 10 or 15 years, as someone has stated. But that means you may be taking some of this block grant money away from more middle class programs. And I think that if you look at these programs, I think that is important. That is one of the things we have been doing. We have identified the 70 programs.

DISTRIBUTED 15,000 BOOKS ON MODEL PROGRAMS

The other thing that we try to do is to get information to find out what is going on. We distributed 15,000 books on model programs. You have to be very careful how you approach this problem, because a broad-brushed approach won't work.

The first person I talked to when I went first to New York and to Los Angeles, was a Dr. Farr, who is a psychiatrist. A white glove approach in medicine won't work. You have to go right down and approach these people one on one, particularly the chronically mentally ill.

The other issue is, how are we going to get entitlements to the people? The reason I consider it to be a local program is because it has to be a one-on-one relationship. If you talk to Mitch Snyder or any advocates around here, they spend a lot of time just talking to these people. When I've talked—in New York, when I went to see the people on the streets with the psychiatrists and the project help, that is exactly what the problem was. Sometimes it takes months. So it is not just a matter of pulling a lever, and it is not just an issue, whereby you can look at the whole population and say it is going to be fixed.

I think that the deinstitutionalization certainly is a problem. But you can look at the veterans. There are about 25 to 30 percent veterans, and you can address that. There are services and they are beginning to do that. You can look at the chronically mentally ill, because that is something that is intolerable in this country, and it should be looked at. The least restrictive environment has to be looked at.

If you are less than 18 years and you have a drug problem, your family can put you in a rehabilitation lockup facility, and you can come back. If you are over 18, you can do nothing. So we have to use some common sense. And I am certainly sure that you will be looking at that.

We also try to cut redtape, and the main thing is that we do sit down, and we try to talk to all the other agencies.

Now one interesting thing I would like to do, and like I say, you've got my testimony as to who we are, how long we've been around, but there is a study that just came out from Chicago, that I find fascinating. I think it is one of the better studies that's come out, because they've actually gone into the streets, talked to the people in the shelters, in the institutions and the people in the streets. And I will tell you the numbers they found were 2,000 or 3,000 in Chicago, and probably in the whole year 5,000 people would be affected. Overall, 55 percent of the homeless slept in shelters. The proportion was 39 percent in the fall and winter. That doesn't surprise us.

The thing that surprises me is on the second part of the synopsis. This is something that the Government now is doing and addressing, and the task force is working on it, and all the different agencies are also trying to address it.

While most of the homeless are eligible for one form or another of income maintenance, less than half received any payments from any public welfare program.

Now if you sit here, you say, well, that's wrong, because if you could get these entitlements to the people, they could be helped. They could begin to afford, maybe, some kind of housing or helping the shelter at least maintain itself. But as I say, the outreach is very difficult. You outreach, get it put together, and the next thing, that person is somewhere else.

Now 89 percent were eligible for general assistance, 20 percent for AFDC, yet 36 percent who qualified were receiving general assistance and only 6 percent were receiving AFDC.

So here is clearly something the Federal Government is doing and is working hard putting together some regulations to see how we can do it more effectively.

While the task force has been in existence, Social Security in New York has been doing outreach. The Veterans Administration has been doing outreach, and you will hear from those people, but you are also going to hear how difficult it is. I am not saying it is an impossible problem, but I am saying we have to be very careful how we do it.

Another thing that was interesting to me is that there was a high prevalence of mental illness. That is not surprising, and they say it was 1 in 4. And that comes out to be about right, 25 percent. Some places, Senator, it is as high as 80 percent. Now, 41 percent have been in local prison and 33 percent had undergone detoxification for alcohol or drug dependency. We have to be very careful when we look at these people and say, well, they are alcoholics. If someone comes from a certain religious perspective and says that is wrong, you shouldn't be drinking alcohol, what you have to remember is, a lot of these people are choosing alcohol as a substitute for

the drugs that they no longer get. So they could be chronically mentally ill. We have seen a lot of that.

Now 2 in 5 had some kind of jail sentences. And 66 percent had been in a mental hospital or a detox unit or had been jailed.

Now this is a study that was done by the University of Massachusetts, and the University of Chicago, through grants from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

I think the task force is a good focus, and we have certainly been a lightning rod in a lot of different—in testimony. I think we have to be careful that we don't try to federalize this entire problem. I think we have to be honest. I know many States have surpluses, and with the new tax bill, there is a certain windfall. I think all this has to be addressed.

The problem is, homelessness is not politically a positive, because these people don't vote, they don't have any money. So it is easy to ask somebody else to do the whole problem.

So to just quickly summarize, I think the task force has been a good focal point. I think we have learned a lot about the problem. We have talked to all the advocates. We have dealt with a lot of the people. I think that as time goes on, and we start addressing through regulations, trying to get the entitlements to the people, that there certainly is a function for the Federal Government.

So I would like to now ask Jim Stimpson from HUD to discuss the housing program.

[The complete prepared statement follows:]

FOR RELEASE ONLY ON DELIVERY

STATEMENT

BY

DR. HARVEY R. VIETH

CHAIRMAN, FEDERAL TASK FORCE ON THE HOMELESS

FAMILY SUPPORT ADMINISTRATION

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

BEFORE THE

HOUSING AND URBAN AFFAIRS SUBCOMMITTEE

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING AND URBAN AFFAIRS

U.S. SENATE

JANUARY 29, 1987

Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee, as Chairman of the Federal Task Force on the Homeless, I am pleased to have the opportunity to testify today.

I have been asked to address the nature and extent of Federal involvement in efforts to help homeless persons. My testimony will focus on the Task Force's efforts to identify and coordinate Federal activities to help feed and shelter the homeless. Witnesses from the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Defense Department will speak more specifically about their activities to help the homeless.

Federal Task Force

The Federal Task Force on the Homeless was established in October 1983 to enable the Federal Government to coordinate Federal activities to serve the homeless. The Task Force includes representatives from 15 Federal agencies. I, as the Chairman, represent HHS, and a representative from HUD is the Vice-chairman. The other 13 members represent: Veterans

Senator CRANSTON. Thank you very much. Mr. Stimpson.

STATEMENT OF JAMES STIMPSON, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR POLICY DEVELOPMENT, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, VICE CHAIR, FEDERAL INTERAGENCY TASK FORCE ON FOOD AND SHELTER

Mr. STIMPSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for inviting the Department of Housing and Urban Development to testify and to present the Department's views on this issue.

My prepared statement, which I will submit for the record, responds to the questions raised in your letter to Secretary Pierce.

I do have a few comments that I would like to make regarding some of the activities undertaken by HUD and what we plan to be doing over the next 2 years.

Over the past few years, the Department has worked to ensure that the resources of both its Housing and Community and Urban Development Programs are used by States and cities to help the homeless poor. In many cases, we have worked directly with cities and public housing authorities, and in some instances, directly with providers. Today a variety of HUD programs are being used, and I will just mention a few examples.

COMMUNITY BLOCK GRANT FUNDS

There's already been reference to the Community Block Grant Program. Communities across the country are using those funds on a regular basis to undertake a variety of activities for the homeless. That is an appropriate use of the Block Grant Program and, indeed, it is one of the purposes of that approach. It provides flexible funds for cities to use where the need is greatest.

In New York City, for example, they have used more than $20 million of their block grant funds in the last couple of years to repair city-owned, tax-foreclosed apartments that will provide housing for homeless families. Los Angeles is using block grant funds to rehabilitate single-room occupancy housing. And in Chicago, they are using it for shelter rehabilitation. We know just from reports that we have received from some cities, not all cities, that in the last 3 years, over $100 million in block grant funds have been used for homeless.

Public housing is also being used in many communities to provide long-term housing for families. Cities such as New York and Philadelphia are using an emergency classification to admit homeless families ahead of waiting lists and are admitting them in an average of 3 months time, according to the recent Conference of Mayors report that was discussed earlier.

We have also worked with housing authorities to demonstrate ways in which our section 8 certificate program—it is one of our largest and most flexible housing programs—can be used. In 1985, we asked the regional offices to reserve part of their allocation of certificates to support local homeless efforts, and we know that that has happened in a number of areas around the country. In Seattle, for example, our regional office has been quite active and has provided over 100 certificates to provide emergency housing.

Last fall, in our 1987 appropriation bill, funds were made available for two new programs, that I am sure you are familiar with, an Emergency Shelter Grant Program and a Transitional Housing Program.

The Department's commitment to helping State and local governments is demonstrated, I think, by the rapid pace with which we have developed the regulations and allocated funds for that program. Within 60 days of enactment, States and cities had been informed of their allocations under the program and the regulations had been published in the Federal Register, and just this week, we are approving applications that we have received.

While many of the Department's programs are being used to provide shelter or permanent housing for the homeless, many of the homeless need specialized housing with supportive services in order to live successfully in a community. We have heard testimony about that this morning.

The troubled and varied nature of the homeless population makes it clear that more than shelter or housing is needed for a large proportion of this population. That is the reason, Mr. Chairman, that we at HUD joined with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation in a national demonstration for the chronically mentally ill, many of whom are homeless. This national demonstration, which is just now getting under way, is designed to support the development of citywide mental health authorities, to coordinate a range of community-based programs and supervised housing for the chronically mentally ill. The Foundation is providing $28 million for the project. It is making low-interest loans of up to $1 million for each participating city, and HUD has committed over 1,000 section 8 certificates with a dollar value of up to $100 million.

We expect to publish very soon our guidelines for a second demonstration program, the recently enacted Transitional Housing Program, which has been funded at $5 million for 1987. Under that program, HUD will fund the acquisition and rehabilitation of structures to be used for transitional housing and a portion of the operating cost of the housing, including the cost of social services. We expect to publish the final guidelines in April and to make funding awards before the end of the fiscal year.

We are requesting an additional $5 million for the program in our 1988 budget. We are, of course, continuing in 1988, our Subsidized Housing Assistance Programs and are requesting 82,000 units of HUD rental assistance for 1988.

I do feel that I have to respond to one recurring theme that I have heard this morning, and that is that the Subsidized Housing Programs have been dismembered, have been drastically cut, the implication being that they no longer exist. That simply is not the case. It is true, Mr. Chairman, that our budget authority has been greatly reduced from 1981. In large part, that is a change in the way we are providing assisted housing, but I think one needs to look at the number of units that the Department is assisting and continues to assist. In 1981, the Federal Government, through HUD, was subsidizing 3.1 million units of housing. Since that time, nearly a million more units have come on line and have been put into service, and we are subsidizing those units.

In addition, in the pipeline of funded reservations and reservations proposed in our 1988 budget, there would be a total of about 400,000 more units, making a total of 1.3 million that will be available by the end of 1988, in addition to the 3.1 million units that HUD was subsidizing in 1981.

Our payments for these units, the subsidy payments, have more than doubled since 1980. In 1980, HUD was spending $4.5 billion a year for assisted housing. In 1988, we will be spending $10 billion a year for assisted housing.

So the facts are, Mr. Chairman, that the number of units has increased. They have not decreased, and while the budget authority has decreased, and that is the figure that most people seem to focus on, I think we do need to look at what actually is out there helping poor families.

Clearly, the homeless population is a difficult population to serve, and we look forward to working with your subcommittee on this problem.

[The complete prepared statement of James W. Stimpson follows:]

Administration, Labor, Defense, Agriculture, Commerce, Education, Energy, Interior, Transportation, ACTION, Federal Emergency Management Agency, General Services Administration, and U.S. Postal Service. Each representative has been personally selected to serve on the Task Force by the head of each agency.

The charter of the Task Force is based on the following principles:

1. Homelessness is essentially a problem handled best at the local level. The problem surfaces at the community level and, as such, efforts to resolve it must be focused at that level. Representatives at the local levels can best assess the needs of their homeless population, and pull together and deliver the appropriate support and assistance, with creativity and compassion.

2. The Federal government supports programs and provides resources to help the homeless. There is a considerable array of existing Federal resources which can be tapped at the State and local levels to help the homeless. These resources include numerous public assistance programs for which the homeless are eligible, as well as surplus building space, supplies, equipment and food. There are additional resources at the State and local levels which can be used to serve the needs of the homeless.

3. Information on existing community-based strategies needs to be shared with other communities. The kinds of activities that can meet the needs of different categories of homeless persons are all being done now somewhere in this country. Therefore, a systematic effort is needed to document and disseminate what is happening, so that other communities can benefit from this experience.

In the light of these principles, the role of the Task Force can be summed up as follows:

1. Identifying potential resources controlled by Federal agencies.

2. Cutting red tape and helping to remove impediments so that these resources can be more effectively targeted to the homeless.

3. Acting as a facilitator or broker between local governments, shelter providers, and Federal agencies, but only when such assistance is requested by local groups or local officials.

4. Serving as an information source on homeless services and issues for the White House, Congress and the provider community.

5. Assisting in identifying examples of successful local approaches to serve the homeless and assisting in disseminating this information throughout the provider community.

Who are the Homeless?

The traditional image of the homeless person as a middle-aged, white male alcoholic no longer holds true. Most studies show that one-third of the homeless have chronic mental illness, up to one-quarter are alcohol or substance abusers, and a disproprionate number, 44%, are minorities. One-quarter to one-third report that they are veterans. Various studies have shown that the homeless today consist of 60-66% single men, 12-13% single women, and 21-27% family groups.* This percentage of families in the most comprehensive study completed recently is 10-12%.** Of course, there is a great deal of overlap among these categories.

While the homeless are found throughout the country, in small and large cities as well as in rural areas, the problem is

*The statistics in this section are from a May 1984 "Report to the Secretary on the Homeless and Emergency Shelters" issued by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and from a January 1986 report of the U.S. Conference of Mayors entitled "The Growth of Hunger, Homelessness and Poverty in America's Cities in 1985 - A 25 City Survey".

**The Condition of the Homeless of Chicago: A Report Based on Surveys Conducted In 1985 and 1986, Rossi, Fisher, and Willis, September 1986.

much greater in larger urban areas -- possibly because more services and resources are found there.

Causes of Homelessness

While many factors contribute to the problems of the homeless, the Task Force considers the major causes to be:

1. Mental illness/deinstitutionalization;
2. Alcohol/drug abuse; and
3. Economic and personal crises - such as, loss of employment, eviction, lack of low-cost housing, divorce, and domestic violence.

Most of the homeless population falls in the first two groups -- the chronically mentally ill and the substance abusers. Unfortunately, these are often the most difficult persons to help. The significant increase in this segment of the homeless population is partly attributable to deinstitutionalization. Nationally, the number of individuals in mental hospitals and institutions declined from 505,000 in 1963 to 125,000 in 1981, without a sufficient corresponding increase in community-based mental health support systems.

Many individuals in the third group - those homeless because of economic and personal crises - are homeless for only a short period of time, until they resolve their personal crises or find

new employment. The lack of affordable housing is also a factor. In the past 10 years, gentrification and urban renewal have led to the loss of over 1 million single room occupancy units (e.g., rooming houses, usually with a shared bath) and other low cost housing.

Federal Programs

The Task Force has identified over 70 Federal programs that can be used to help the homeless. Many of these programs are block grants that can be used for a wide variety of purposes, including feeding and sheltering the homeless.

Decisions on how to spend block grant funds generally rest at the State or local level. Therefore, a shelter provider or other interested party must approach the State or locality to request that block grant funds be directed to homeless services. Other Federal programs include entitlement or discretionary grant programs. Assistance from these programs is provided directly to individuals or institutions.

The Task Force works with its members in identifying usable resources and in suggesting ways in which they can be targeted more effectively. At the same time, the responsibility for carrying out a given activity resides with the appropriate agency.

For example, the Task Force has negotiated ten agreements with Federal agencies to support local food and shelter operations. These include agreements with: HUD and USDA's Farmers Home Administration to use single-family homes in their inventories as shelters; DOD to renovate and lease DOD facilities as shelters, to store goods for foodbanks in their warehouses, and to donate nonmarketable foodstuffs from their commissaries to foodbanks; and GSA to lease vacant Federal buildings as shelters, and to donate surplus Federal equipment to foodbank and shelter operators.

In addition to negotiated agreements, there are a number of ongoing activities. For example, the Social Security Administration and the Veterans Administration have established programs to reach out to homeless individuals who may be eligible for benefits they administer. As part of these outreach activites, staff provide information on benefit requirements to shelter operators, and even travel to shelters and soup kitchens to talk with the homeless about their potential eligibility.

Another example is the Labor Department's activities, which have made it easier for the homeless to participate in job-training programs. They are also in the process of establishing a model program in 10 cities for homeless unemployed veterans.

Conclusion

In closing, I would note that agencies throughout the Federal government -- those represented on the Task Force as well as others -- have generally been extremely cooperative. Together, we will continue to work with States and communities in serving the needs of the homeless.

Thank you for the Subcommittee's interest in this vital issue. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

STATEMENT OF JAMES W. STIMPSON
DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR
POLICY DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
BEFORE
SENATE SUBCOMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND URBAN AFFAIRS
JANUARY 29, 1987

Testimony - Senate Hearing on Homeless

Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for inviting the Department of Housing and Urban Development to testify on homelessness in America, and to present the Administration's views on various aspects of the problem. In order to facilitate the work of this committee, I will address the issues raised in your letter to Secretary Pierce in the order in which you presented them.

I. What is the size and nature of homelessness in America?

Research into the size and nature of the homeless indicates that this population varies in size from jurisdiction to jurisdiction and is one with serious and often apparently intractable problems.

The first systematic study of the homeless population nationwide, designed to provide a profile of the homeless, and conducted by the Department of Housing and Urban Development in the winter of 1983-1984 provided a range of estimates of the daily numbers of homeless persons of between 192,000 and 586,000. The HUD study concluded that the homeless population most probably was 250,000 to 350,000 persons on any given day.

A 1986 study by Harvard Economist Richard B. Freeman for the National Bureau of Economic Research, based on interviews with homeless populations about the proportion of time they spent in shelters compared to the proportion of time in the streets, and extrapolating those findings to determine the ratio of homeless in shelters to homeless in the streets, developed a national estimate of the daily homeless population of 270,000 persons in 1983, and approximately 350,000 homeless persons by 1985.

A recent study, "The Condition of the Homeless in Chicago," conducted by a joint research team from the University of Chicago and the University of Massachusetts, found 2,400 homeless persons in that city on a given fall or winter night in 1985-1986, much less than the HUD estimate of 19,000 - 20,000 for that city. This study of the homeless in Chicago was based on actual interviews with homeless persons, both those in shelters, and those found during intensive nighttime searches of samples of census blocks, locating and interviewing homeless persons who were on the streets or in places to which the public had access, such as bus stations, doorways, cars, and hallways.

While estimates of the size of the homeless population are relevant, these studies also provide important insights into the nature of the homeless population. Some findings confirm generally-held views; others provide new information.

First, as expected, the homeless are very poor. The HUD study, basing its findings on local studies of homeless populations, concluded that an average of 22 percent of the homeless population had income from employment,

and 30 to 35 percent received income from public assistance programs. Those employed usually worked only on a part-time or sporadic basis and had very little income from employment. Approximately half of the homeless population had no obvious source of income, and subsisted by begging, selling blood, collecting and selling cans, or receiving handouts of some sort.

The Chicago study found that cash incomes among the homeless "were appallingly low." Almost one homeless person in five had no income during the previous month, and half of the homeless had incomes below $100. The average monthly income was only $168.00.

Approximately one in three of the homeless in Chicago said they had received some income from employment in the previous month, but, given the very low-incomes reported, the researchers concluded this must have been intermittent, casual labor with very low pay rates.

The homeless population is predominantly male. Different studies estimate that between two-thirds (HUD) and three-fourths (Chicago) of the homeless are men. The Harvard study stated that the homeless were largely men. Single women constitute approximately 13 percent of the homeless population.

Homeless individuals are neither very young, nor very old. The HUD study found that the average age of the homeless was 34, and both the Chicago and Harvard studies found an average age of about 40. These findings are important, because, in general, public welfare systems, are designed with the expectation that single persons in their "productive years" will be able to support themselves through employment. These systems do not provide the kind of cash benefits for persons without families that are provided for families with children and for the elderly which enable the latter, by and large, to secure housing and avoid homelessness.

While some of the unemployment among the homeless may be linked to labor market conditions in specific areas, the vast majority of the homeless appear to have little significant prospect of steady work. All studies agree that approximately one-quarter to one-third of the homeless are mentally ill. The Chicago study found that one-third had been in a detoxification unit for alcohol or drug abuse; the HUD study found that 38 percent of shelter users had alcohol or drug problems, and the Harvard study found that 29 percent abuse alcohol and 14 percent abuse hard drugs. Thus, over half of the homeless adults appear to have disabilities that would likely prevent them from securing and maintaining jobs unless they receive such services as medical treatment, counseling, and job placement.

A significant finding of the Harvard study was that 39 percent of the homeless stated that they had spent some time in jail. The Chicago study confirmed the prevalence of incarceration among the homeless, finding that 16.5 percent had been in a State or Federal prison, and 41 percent had spent some time in a city or county jail. A background of incarceration presents another impediment to employment for homeless persons.

While the majority of the homeless are single persons, the 1984 HUD study found that 21 percent of the homeless were in family groups, usually single mothers with children. The 1986 Chicago study found that at any time, between 22 and 25 percent of the shelter population consisted of family groups. The Harvard study indicated that there has been an increase in family homelessness in recent years, a perception that is widely shared.

Family homelessness is most often caused by personal crises, such as divorce, domestic violence, and eviction, either from quarters shared with others, or for non-payment of rent. The HUD study found that families are usually homeless for a relatively short period of time. The Chicago study confirmed that finding, indicating that more than half of the young women with families had been homeless less than 3 months. The Harvard study also found that family homelessness was relatively short-term. While family homelessness is generally short-term, it is particularly serious because of its adverse effects on the young children involved.

2. What is the Administration's assessment of the U.S. Conference of Mayor's recent report "The Continued Growth of Hunger, Homelessness and Poverty in America's Cities: 1986?"

The Conference of Mayors report is useful in portraying the nature of the local homeless problem for the responding cities and the wide variation in the homeless population from city to city. The report is a compilation of responses to a survey of Mayors in some 25 cities asking whether homelessness, hunger, and poverty had increased or decreased in those cities. It conveys particularly relevant information on the views of city officials with respect to the current status of homelessness and related issues.

3. What are the responsibilities of local, State and Federal governments in meeting the needs of homeless people?

The Administration believes that all levels of government--plus the private sector--have important roles to play in meeting the needs of the homeless.

The involvement of local governments obviously is essential in addressing the problems of the homeless. Only local governments can tailor solutions to the locally identified needs for housing and services. The appropriate response for Charleston, South Carolina, which reported

85 percent single men in its homeless population to the Conference of Mayors, would be different from that of Yonkers, New York, which reported a homeless population of only 25 percent single men, but 50 percent families. Louisville, Kentucky, which estimates that its homeless population is 60 percent mentally ill, will need to take different actions than Los Angeles, California, which estimates a homeless population in which only 14 percent are mentally ill.

Local governments are also in the best position to provide support to the private organizations which operate most of the nation's shelters for the homeless. In few other areas of public concern has the private sector been so involved. National organizations such as the Salvation Army, the United Way of America, Travelers Aid and the American Red Cross, plus thousands of churches, synagogues and local volunteer organizations have developed a shelter system that is national in scope, yet local in character.

The HUD study found that over 90 percent of all shelters are privately run. As of 1983, a variety of private sources provided 63 percent of the funding for the operation of shelters nationwide. These private sector organizations, many of which are small, can best deal with local governments in securing support for their efforts to aid the homeless in individual communities.

We believe the appropriate role for State and Federal governments is to provide support to local governments and to make sure that programs designed for the poor reach those who are homeless. Additionally, both Federal and State governments can test new approaches to preventing homelessness, and to alleviating homelessness when it occurs.

The Federal government has provided direct financial support to those serving the homeless through the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Emergency Food and Shelter Grant program. Funds made available through this program from FY 1983 through FY 1987 total $370 million, and the Administration has proposed an additional $80 million in its FY 1988 budget.

Virtually all Federal programs designed for the nation's poor can also serve the homeless. In 1983, a Federal Task Force on the Homeless was created to identify and eliminate barriers to use of those programs by the homeless, and to cut government red tape in responding to requests for assistance in serving the homeless from governments and private organizations. The Task Force, composed of 15 Federal agencies and chaired by HHS, initially concentrated on food and emergency overnight shelter issues. It has since expanded its focus to include longer-term and more permanent ways of identifying and treating the underlying causes of homelessness.

Many well known Federal programs play an important role in providing benefits to homeless families and individuals. These include direct income supplementation programs such as Social Security, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), veterans benefits, and food assistance programs such as the Food Stamp and surplus food distribution programs.

A number of Federal agencies have taken actions to enable their programs to serve homeless persons who are entitled to benefits. For example, the Social Security Administration has undertaken a nationwide effort to make sure that homeless people who are eligible for Social Security or SSI are able to receive their benefits even though they have no fixed address. The Social Security Administration will send checks in care of a shelter provider or a friend, and when necessary, will even have checks sent to the local Social Security office where the homeless person can pick them up.

The AFDC program provides income support for families with children. Additionally, the Emergency Assistance for Families (EAF) component of the AFDC program will pay for emergency shelter for AFDC families which lose their housing for any reason, including eviction. While EAF is now available in 26 States, all States may elect to participate in this program to help homeless families.

Over the past several years, the Department of Housing and Urban Development has taken a number of actions to make its programs and resources available to assist the homeless, and to encourage States and cities to use them for this purpose. Following completion of the HUD study on the homeless and emergency shelter in May 1984, Secretary Pierce directed Department staff to identify ways in which HUD programs could be used to meet the needs of various segments of the homeless population. In November 1984, the Secretary directed principal staff of the Department to immediately take a number of administrative actions to expand the use of HUD resources to aid the homeless. In January 1985 the Secretary wrote to the Nation's Governors, and the Mayors of communities which are entitled to receive Community Development Block Grant funds, informing them of HUD resources that were available to assist the homeless, and urging them to make use of those resources.

Today, a wide variety of HUD programs are being used to help the homeless.

-- HUD single-family acquired properties are being leased to shelter providers to provide temporary shelter for homeless families.

-- Communities across the country are using HUD CDBG funds to undertake a wide variety of activities tailored to the needs of their local homeless populations.

- Los Angeles is using CDBG funds to rehabilitate Single Room Occupancy housing to provide for the needs of the many single men among its homeless population.

- New York City is using $10 million of its FY 1986 CDBG funds to repair city-owned tax-foreclosed apartments (in rem housing) to provide housing for homeless families; it used $11 million of these funds for the same purpose in earlier years.

- Detroit has used $300,000 in CDBG funds for operating expenses for a homeless shelter, and $100,000 more for mobile health care to serve the homeless.

- Chicago is using $1 million in CDBG funds for homeless shelter rehabilitation.

Since 1983, cities have used over $100 million in CDBG funds to provide shelter and services for their homeless populations.

Public housing is being used in many communities to provide long-term housing for homeless families. Cities such as New York and Philadelphia are using an "emergency" classification to admit homeless families ahead of waiting lists and are admitting them in an average of three months time, according to the Conference of Mayors report. The Department works with Public Housing Agencies which do not now have the ability to use an emergency admission procedure to make this change as quickly as possible.

Some Public Housing Agencies have small units which are difficult to rent to elderly families. HUD has encouraged these PHAs to apply for authorization to rent these units to single people who might otherwise be homeless, and is assisting them in this effort.

To preserve the dwindling resources of single room occupancy (SRO) housing, such as low cost residential hotels, and provide permanent housing for the many single individuals among the homeless, the Department has made this housing eligible for the voucher program, the Section 8 Existing and Moderate Rehabilitation programs, the Rental Rehabilitation program, and the Housing Development Grant program.

We have also worked to demonstrate ways in which Section 8 certificates, one of HUD's largest and most flexible housing assistance programs, can be used to help those who are homeless. In 1985 the Department asked its Regional Administrators to consider reserving a portion of their fair share allocation of Section 8 certificates for FY 1985 to support local homeless efforts. A small reserve of certificates in the Central Office was also made available for use in emergency situations. Two hundred and fifty certificates from the Headquarters reserve were assigned to communities to provide housing assistance for the homeless: 25 to Northern Missouri, 25 to Sonoma County, California, 100 to Anaheim, California, and 100 to Phoenix, Arizona.

The Kansas City Regional Office has worked with communities in its area to develop programs for the homeless using Section 8 certificates. The Seattle Regional Office has approved use of 110 Section 8 certificates to provide emergency housing for the homeless: 50 in Pierce County, Washington; 40 in Tacoma, Washington; and 20 in Snohomish County, Washington. The St. Louis Field Office provided 20 certificates to a demonstration project developed by the Salvation Army, St. Louis County, and the St. Louis Housing Authority to provide assistance for the homeless. These are examples we know about. In addition, PHAs are now using certificates from their own allocations to help the homeless obtain long-term housing.

The Department's commitment to helping State and local governments provide shelter and services for their homeless populations is demonstrated by the rapidity with which the Department has developed proposed regulations and allocated funds for the new $10 million Emergency Shelter Grant program. Congress enacted this program, which provides funds by formula to States and cities for the rehabilitation of properties to be used as homeless shelters, and the operation of homeless shelters, and to a limited extent, funds for services for the homeless, in the Continuing Resolution for FY 1987, which was signed into law on October 18, 1986. Within 60 days, States and cities had been informed of their allocations under the program, and proposed regulations governing the program had been published in the Federal Register.

While many of the Department's programs are being used to provide either shelter or permanent housing for the homeless, many of the homeless need specialized housing with supportive services in order to live successfully in the community. The troubled and varied nature of the homeless population, as described in various studies, makes it clear that more than shelter or housing is needed for a large proportion of the homeless.

The high incidence of mental illness among the homeless population, which was reflected in the HUD study, led the Department to join with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation in an initiative to address the needs of the chronically mentally ill. The initiative, titled the Program for the Chronically Mentally Ill, is designed to support the development of city-wide mental health authorities to coordinate a range of community-based programs and supervised housing for the chronically mentally ill. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation is providing $28 million for the project, and will make available low interest loans of up to $1 million for each participating city to enable it to acquire or renovate housing for the chronically mentally ill. HUD is providing 1,125 Section 8 certificates to be used to provide housing assistance in connection with the initiative. Cities participating in the demonstration are: Denver, Colorado; Honolulu, Hawaii; Baltimore, Maryland; Charlotte, North Carolina; Cincinnati, Columbus and Toledo, Ohio; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and Austin, Texas.

Successful use of Section 8 certificates in connection with this demonstration could provide access to a major housing resource for the chronically mentally ill. Section 8 certificates and housing vouchers, which are similar to Section 8 certificates, are widely available across the country, with approximately 1 million certificates and vouchers now in existence. With a turnover rate of about 15 percent per year, or about 150,000 units and new allocations each year of about 100,000 units, this program provides access to approximately 250,000 units per year for new recipients. Some of these clearly can be used to alleviate and prevent homelessness among the chronically mentally ill.

HUD expects to publish proposed guidelines soon for a second demonstration program, the recently enacted Transitional Housing Demonstration Program, funded at $5 million for FY 1987. Under this demonstration program HUD will fund the acquisition and rehabilitation of structures to be used for transitional housing, and a portion of the operating cost of this housing, including the cost of social services needed by the residents of the housing. Transitional housing is designed to help the homeless make the transition from the streets or shelters to independent living in the community, by providing a combination of housing and supportive services. This demonstration program will allow us to test combinations of housing and services for a range of groups among the homeless, including alcoholics and other substance abusers, victims of domestic violence, and families with children.

We expect to publish final guidelines for this program in April, and to make the funding awards before the end of the fiscal year.

The Department is requesting an additional $5 million for this program in its FY 1988 budget.

4. To what extent does a shortage of affordable housing for low-income Americans contribute to homelessness?

Because the most obvious problem of the homeless is lack of housing, many people, including a number of the respondents to the Conference of Mayor's survey, attribute homelessness to a lack of available low-cost housing and recommend the reinstitution of housing production programs to meet homeless needs.

From a national perspective, the fundamental problem is not so much the scarcity of housing, though there are some areas where housing is in short supply, as it is a problem of low-income families not having sufficient income to afford the housing that is available in the community. In 1982, the President's Commission on Housing reported that the ability to pay for decent housing had become the predominant housing problem faced by the poor, reflecting a major change from the post-war period when housing supply and quality were the foremost concerns.

Senator CRANSTON. Let me ask you, was it your statement that there has been an increase in the number of units available? What units are you talking about, what sort of units?

Mr. STIMPSON. I am talking about the units that we subsidize under the section 8 programs, the certificates, there are some vouchers in that program now, rent supplements, and others.

Senator CRANSTON. In some communities, those vouchers apparently don't serve a purpose, because there is not sufficient housing that people can get into, even with the use of those vouchers. Is that not the case?

Mr. STIMPSON. In some communities, in some cities, there is a tight rental market; however, we have not, as yet, found any place where they cannot be used, where they are not being used. In some communities, it takes longer for someone to find a unit, but the comparable program is our section 8 Certificate Program, which now serves over 800,000 families. That program has been successfully working in all communities, even in New York City and Los Angeles.

Senator CRANSTON. Dr. Vieth, I understood you to testify that there has been a loss of 1 million units. What is the net situation, as far as your understanding goes?

Mr. VIETH. The units I was talking about would have private units that were lost. They are really what used to be referred to as flop houses, and then, it would get better than that, but at least it was a place.

Senator CRANSTON. What is the net situation, though, has there been a gain or a loss in the number of units available?

Mr. VIETH. There would be a loss.

Senator CRANSTON. A loss. Our projections prepared by the committee staff are that there will be, under present projections and plans and budget authorities, and so forth, a very sharp decline in lost housing and in vouchers and in the general opportunity for Americans. So we have the looming situation of an even more severe crisis than now faces many, many Americans.

I would like to add that we are going to have the Veterans Administration testify before the Veterans Committee on February 18 at a hearing. They are not with us today.

May I now turn to you, Mr. Kleiman?

STATEMENT OF STEVEN N. KLEIMAN, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR INSTALLATION ASSISTANCE, OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE (ACQUISITION AND LOGISTICS)

Mr. KLEIMAN. Thank you. Mr. Chairman, it is a pleasure to be here to discuss the Department of Defense shelter for the homeless program. In 1983, Secretary Weinberger asked the military services to make facilities available on a temporary basis to assist those in need of emergency shelter. At that time, the Department focused its efforts on assisting families and individuals who, as a result of ongoing economic recession, were moving from city to city in search of employment.

DOD PARTICIPATION FOR THE HOMELESS

By 1984, having gained more insight into the magnitude of the problem and the needs expressed by the localities that we talked to, it became apparent that the homeless were in need of long-term permanent type housing, not just emergency assistance, as we had originally envisioned. In order to meet this need, Secretary Weinberger assigned responsibility for the program to an Assistant Secretary of Defense reporting directly to him.

When it was learned that local governments did not have funds to renovate excess buildings on military bases, Congressman Dan Daniel provided the language for the Shelter for the Homeless statute that guides our program. Section 2546 of title 10 of United States Code, permits the Defense Department to renovate and repair buildings and provide certain specific services incidental to the establishment of a shelter on a military installation. We cannot operate the shelters nor can we fund their operation. Defense is prohibited from making grants or payments directly to local governments or charitable organizations that operate facilities. The statute further states that shelters may be established on military installations only to the extent that they do not interfere with military readiness or ongoing operations.

The opportunities to establish shelters on military installations, having excess buildings that are favorably located with respect to the homeless population, are relatively few. Many cities and local governments we dealt with stated that they do not have sufficient funds to support a shelter operation, even if Defense renovates a building for them. Further complicating the situation is the fact that most Defense Department installations, deemed most likely to have a vacant building, are located outside of the jurisdiction requesting our assistance. This situation makes it infeasible and impracticable to transport one jurisdiction's homeless to another.

The Defense mission at any installation is the Department's number one priority, as the Shelter for the Homeless legislation recognizes. If the placement of a shelter on a military base in any way conflicts with or impedes upon the primary mission of that installation or impacts on the soldiers, sailors and airmen that live and work on that base, we cannot establish a shelter at that installation.

Since Secretary Weinberger initiated the Department's program in 1983, we have opened 11 shelters. Currently, we have 2 under construction and scheduled to open later this year, bringing the total to 13. We are also negotiating with local jurisdictions on three other proposals for inclusion in this year's program.

To date, the Department has spent over $2.9 million to renovate and repair DOD buildings on DOD installations.

Over the last 4 years, DOD has provided, at no charge, thousands of blankets and cots to shelter operators all over the Nation along with other articles of bedding, such as pillow cases and sheets. We are continually making surplus property available to State governments through the General Services Administration Federal Surplus Property Program. Furniture, fixtures, window treatments, and clothing may be obtained from the State agent for surplus property in each State.

We have also helped to feed the homeless. Since 1983, Defense has donated over 4 million pounds of unused food to food banks throughout the country.

We are proud of the Department's accomplishments. I can assure you that the Department will continue to establish shelters, in spite of the constraints imposed by our primary mission, when and where those opportunities exist.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The complete prepared statement of Steven N. Kleiman follows:]

Because housing affordability is generally the problem, the Administration has made the housing voucher program the cornerstone of its assisted housing policy. The housing voucher and its predecessor, the Section 8 Existing Housing certificate, provide an income supplement that helps families afford good quality housing in the community-at-large, not just in public housing or in isolated multi-family projects built under Federal construction programs. The housing voucher approach recognizes that the private market provides in most instances an adequate supply of rental housing for the Nation, as evidenced in the statistics for rental construction and supply during recent years. During the past two years, for example, multi-family construction has been at its highest level in more than a decade and rental vacancy rates in 1985 and 1986 were higher than in nearly 20 years.

If the availability of low cost housing were directly associated with homelessness, we should have a declining homeless population at this time. Between 1981 and 1986, almost one million additional units providing Federal rental subsidies were made available to low-income households in communities across the Nation. In despite of this increase in housing assistance, the general consensus is homelessness is also increasing.

There is one caveat to this overall picture. It is likely that the decline in the number of Single Room Occupancy (SRO) housing units, such as those found in low cost residential hotels, has contributed to the extent of

homelessness among single individuals. A portion of the homeless, although a distinct minority, were residents of SROs immediately prior to their becoming homeless.

During the decade from 1970 to 1980, cities lost, on average, 47 percent of the SRO units that were available at the beginning of the decade, according to the State of New York's report "Homelessness in New York State" (1984). The HUD study on homelessness reported that New York City alone had lost 50,000 SRO units in the six year period from 1975 to 1981. Over the same period, Denver's residential hotels went from 45 to 17 in number; San Francisco lost 4,000 SRO units in the early 1970's and an additional 6,000 were lost by the end of the decade. Seattle has lost about 2,200 of these units since 1974.

A number of programs to stem the further loss of SRO units have been initiated. As indicated earlier, HUD has made SRO's eligible for its major housing programs. Cities are taking advantage of these programs. In Seattle, SRO housing is being developed through the Housing Development Action Grant Program; in Los Angeles, low-cost residential hotels are being rehabilitated using the Rental Rehabilitation program, and in Portland, Oregon four residential hotels have been rehabilitated using the Section 8 Moderate Rehabilitation program.

5. How would problems of homeless Americans be relieved by the Administration's recently submitted budget proposals?

The Administration's proposed budget for FY 1988 seeks to respond to the needs of the homeless in several ways.

The Administration proposes to continue the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Emergency Food and Shelter grant program. This program, which distributes funding directly to those serving the homeless through a national board of private charities, is proposed for funding at a level of $80 million for FY 88.

We are also requesting an additional $5 million to continue the Transitional Housing Demonstration program for the homeless. This program, is designed to test innovative approaches to providing housing and support services for the homeless so that they can move to independent living.

The FY 1988 budget also proposes to increase funding for the community support program administered by the Alcohol, Drug Abuse and Mental Health Administration in HHS. This additional funding will be targetted to the homeless mentally ill.

Resources will be provided in 1987 and 1988 to establish a clearinghouse on the homeless in the Department of Health and Human Services, under the aegis of the Interagency Task Force on the Homeless. The clearinghouse will serve as the Federal focal point for information and technical assistance for States and local communities.

Existing Federal programs which are intended to help the poor generally also help the homeless.

In housing assistance, the Budget requests an additional 102,000 units of rental assistance, including 20,000 for FHMA. Most of these are housing vouchers.

The budget is proposing $2.6 billion for the Community Development Block Grant program, which many communities have used to aid the homeless. While this is less than in previous years, legislation is proposed to target these resources to the most needy communities.

Finally, basic income support programs which can alleviate poverty among the homeless will be continued at the levels necessary to provide benefits to those who qualify. Additionally, we intend to continue our efforts to make sure that the homeless have access to the entitlement programs, including food stamps, supplemental security income, aid to families with dependent children, VA benefits, and Social Security.

The problem of homelessness in America is complex, varied, and urgent. It will be important for all levels of government, Federal, State and local, and the private sector to continue to work together to address the needs of homeless men, women, and children in communities across the country.

We at HUD look forward to working with this Subcommittee and Congress to further evolve effective means to deal with this urgent and complicated human issue.

STATEMENT

BY

STEVEN N. KLEIMAN

ASSISTANT FOR INSTALLATION ASSISTANCE

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

(ACQUISITION AND LOGISTICS)

Before the

HOUSING AND URBAN AFFAIRS SUBCOMMITTEE

of the

UNITED STATES SENATE

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING AND URBAN AFFAIRS

Thursday, January 29, 1987

MR. CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE, IT IS A PLEASURE TO BE HERE TO DISCUSS THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE SHELTER FOR THE HOMELESS PROGRAM.

IN 1983, AT THE REQUEST OF THE WHITE HOUSE OFFICE OF PRIVATE SECTOR INITIATIVES, SECRETARY WEINBERGER ASKED THE MILITARY SERVICES TO MAKE FACILITIES AVAILABLE, ON A TEMPORARY BASIS, TO ASSIST THOSE IN NEED OF EMERGENCY SHELTER. AT THAT TIME, THE DEPARTMENT FOCUSED ITS EFFORTS ON ASSISTING FAMILIES AND INDIVIDUALS WHO, AS A RESULT OF THE ONGOING ECONOMIC RECESSION, WERE MOVING FROM CITY TO CITY IN SEARCH OF EMPLOYMENT.

BY 1984, HAVING GAINED MORE INSIGHT INTO THE MAGNITUDE OF THE PROBLEM AND THE NEEDS EXPRESSED BY THE LOCALITIES WE TALKED TO, IT BECAME APPARENT THAT THE HOMELESS WERE IN NEED OF LONG-TERM, PERMANENT TYPE HOUSING, NOT JUST EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE AS WE HAD ORIGINALLY ENVISIONED. IN ORDER TO MEET THIS NEED, SECRETARY WEINBERGER ASSIGNED RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE PROGRAM TO AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE REPORTING DIRECTLY TO THE SECRETARY.

WHEN IT WAS LEARNED THAT LOCAL GOVERNMENTS DID NOT HAVE FUNDS TO RENOVATE EXCESS BUILDINGS ON THE BASES, CONGRESSMAN DAN DANIEL PROVIDED THE LANGUAGE FOR THE SHELTER FOR THE HOMELESS STATUTE THAT GUIDES OUR PROGRAM. SECTION 2546 OF TITLE 10, OF UNITED STATES CODE, PERMITS THE DEFENSE DEPARTMENT TO RENOVATE AND REPAIR BUILDINGS AND PROVIDE CERTAIN SPECIFIC SERVICES INCIDENTAL

TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A SHELTER ON A MILITARY INSTALLATION. WE CANNOT OPERATE THE SHELTERS NOR CAN WE FUND THEIR OPERATION. DEFENSE IS PROHIBITED FROM MAKING GRANTS OR PAYMENTS DIRECTLY TO LOCAL GOVERNMENTS OR CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS THAT OPERATE THE FACILITIES. THE STATUTE FURTHER STATES THAT SHELTERS MAY BE ESTABLISHED ON MILITARY INSTALLATIONS ONLY TO THE EXTENT THAT THEY DO NOT INTERFERE WITH MILITARY READINESS OR ONGOING OPERATIONS.

THE OPPORTUNITIES TO ESTABLISH SHELTERS, ON MILITARY INSTALLATIONS HAVING EXCESS BUILDINGS THAT ARE FAVORABLY LOCATED WITH RESPECT TO THE HOMELESS POPULATION, ARE RELATIVELY FEW. MANY CITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS WE DEALT WITH STATED THAT THEY DO NOT HAVE SUFFICIENT FUNDS TO SUPPORT A SHELTER OPERATION EVEN IF DEFENSE RENOVATES A BUILDING FOR THEM. FURTHER COMPLICATING THE SITUATION IS THE FACT THAT MOST DEFENSE DEPARTMENT INSTALLATIONS, DEEMED MOST LIKELY TO HAVE A VACANT BUILDING, ARE LOCATED OUTSIDE OF THE JURISDICTION REQUESTING OUR ASSISTANCE. THIS SITUATION MAKES IT INFEASIBLE AND IMPRACTICABLE TO TRANSPORT ONE JURISTICTION'S HOMELESS TO ANOTHER.

THE DEFENSE MISSION AT ANY INSTALLATION IS THE DEPARTMENT'S NUMBER ONE PRIORITY AS THE SHELTER FOR THE HOMELESS LEGISLATION RECOGNIZES. IF THE PLACEMENT OF A SHELTER ON A MILITARY BASE IN ANY WAY CONFLICTS WITH, OR IMPEDES UPON, THE PRIMARY MISSION AT THAT INSTALLATION OR IMPACTS ON THE SOLDIERS, SAILORS, AND AIRMEN THAT LIVE AND WORK ON THAT BASE, WE CANNOT ESTABLISH A SHELTER AT THAT INSTALLATION.

SINCE SECRETARY WEINBERGER INITIATED THE DEPARTMENT'S PROGRAM IN 1983, WE HAVE OPENED 11 SHELTERS. THEY ARE LOCATED AT THE NAVAL RESERVE CENTER, LAWRENCE, MA; THE NAVAL AIR STATION, CORPUS CHRISTI, TX; KIRTLAND AIR FORCE BASE, ALBUQUERQUE, NM; AN ARMY RESERVE CENTER, PHILADELPHIA, PA; CAMP PARKS ARMY RESERVE BASE, ALAMEDA COUNTY, CA; WALTER REED ARMY MEDICAL CENTER, FOREST GLEN ANNEX, MD; FORT JACKSON, COLUMBIA, SC; AN ARMY WAREHOUSE, SEATTLE, WA; THE WASHINGTON NAVY YARD, WASHINGTON, D.C.; FORT MONMOUTH, NJ; AND FORT BELVOIR, FAIRFAX COUNTY, VA. TWO MORE ARE UNDER CONSTRUCTION AND SCHEDULED TO OPEN LATER THIS YEAR AT FORT MEADE, MD AND CAMP KILMER ARMY RESERVE CENTER, NJ. DEFENSE IS CURRENTLY REVIEWING THREE MORE PROPOSALS FOR THIS YEAR'S PROGRAM. TO DATE, WE HAVE SPENT OVER $2.9 MILLION TO RENOVATE AND REPAIR DEFENSE BUILDINGS ON DEFENSE INSTALLATIONS. OVER THE LAST FOUR YEARS, DEFENSE HAS PROVIDED, AT NO CHARGE, THOUSANDS OF BLANKETS AND COTS TO SHELTER OPERATORS ALL OVER THE NATION ALONG WITH OTHER ARTICLES OF BEDDING SUCH AS PILLOW CASES AND SHEETS. WE ALSO CONTINUALLY MAKE SURPLUS DEFENSE PROPERTY AVAILABLE TO STATE GOVERNMENTS THROUGH THE GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION FEDERAL SURPLUS PROPERTY PROGRAM. FURNITURE, FIXTURES, WINDOW TREATMENTS, AND CLOTHING MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE STATE AGENT FOR SURPLUS PROPERTY IN THEIR RESPECTIVE STATE. WE HAVE ALSO HELPED TO FEED THE HOMELESS. SINCE 1983, DEFENSE HAS DONATED OVER FOUR

MILLION POUNDS OF UNUSED FOOD TO FOOD BANKS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY.

WE ARE PROUD OF THE DEFENSE DEPARTMENT'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS. I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT THE DEPARTMENT WILL CONTINUE TO ESTABLISH SHELTERS, IN SPITE OF THE CONSTRAINTS IMPOSED BY OUR PRIMARY MISSION, WHEN AND WHERE THOSE OPPORTUNITIES EXIST.

Senator CRANSTON. Thank you very, very much.

We heard some compelling testimony earlier today from people who feel that there is a real national and growing crisis in the homeless situation.

Do you share that sense of urgency, or do you feel that the problem is being exaggerated?

Mr. VIETH. I have seen an increase, certainly, in the last 3 years, and I think it is very difficult to count who the homeless are. So it is hard to tell, percentagewise, how much of an increase it would be. I have one interesting experience that we had when we were involved quite directly in a shelter in Anacostia. There was quite a bit of press on it, and it was a clean, well-staffed shelter, when it opened up, and we found from the statistics that the providers kept that up, one-third of those people were brand-new homeless people who had been dumped there by other people.

NEED FOR LOCAL LEVEL INVOLVEMENT

So you see, Mr. Chairman, what you are dealing with is very difficult. That is why I keep referring back to the local level, because they can see who it is that they are dealing with, whereas, if you open up some kind of housing for everybody, I am not sure that you will even be able to reach those people and get them into the shelters.

Senator CRANSTON. Any other comments on that point?

Mr. KLEIMAN. Mr. Chairman, as I indicated in my testimony, when Defense started its initiative back in 1983, our first shelter in Corpus Christi, TX, was designed to handle four families. It was considered a huge success. As recently as yesterday, the city of Philadelphia has asked for 50,000 to 75,000 square feet to house hundreds of homeless people. So I think, just from my agency's perspective, the requests for assistance have been greatly magnified, in terms of the numbers of people that are impacted. In 1983 we were dealing in terms of 10 to 20 person facilities. Today, we are now talking about facilities to house hundreds of people, and obviously, that kind of space is very difficult to find.

Senator CRANSTON. The President's budget points with pride to the fact that HUD has set aside 1,000 vouchers to help homeless people who are mentally ill. That is not additional assistance, though, is it? Isn't that from the present pool of——

Mr. STIMPSON. That is from the present pool, yes, sir.

Senator CRANSTON. So it is really meaning some other low income people will not get the help they would have gotten or vouchers they would have gotten. So it is robbing Peter to pay Paul, in fact.

Mr. STIMPSON. These are low income people that would be normally eligible, Senator.

Senator CRANSTON. Well, it means that some other people won't get vouchers, though, since you are not adding to the number.

Mr. VIETH. Well, I think it is the whole issue of setting the priority at the local level. If there is a certain limited amount of money, then you should help the people who are most vulnerable, and certainly, it would be the homeless people. It is true that you are

taking maybe some from somebody else, but in the process, you are serving these people who are outside.

Senator CRANSTON. You are serving certain people.

Do you have any understanding or knowledge of what the administration's attitude is, one, on the $50 million that is in process of being appropriated for emergency help and, two, on the Foley-McKinney bill?

Mr. STIMPSON. I can't speak to the Foley-McKinney bill, except to the extent that it is a very large amount of money, and I think the administration's budget reflects the level of funding for categorical homeless programs that is appropriate under the current budget restraints. I would have to say that the 1988 budget does include the level of funds that Congress appropriated last year for the transitional housing demonstration at HUD. It does include a total of 102,000 units, assisted housing units, 20,000 for Farmers Home, 82,000 for HUD, and a FEMA appropriation of $80 million.

Mr. VIETH. One thing, I would like to say that we have seen of real urgency, and that has to do with the Homeless Eligibility Clarification Act under the Antidrug Abuse Act of 1986. HHS is drafting rules and guidelines to clarify that AFDC and Medicaid benefits are not to be denied to otherwise eligible individuals because of a lack of address. These rules and guidelines have to be finished within the next 60 days. That is even more than that, because it will include some outreach. Food and nutrition is drafting a rule to implement the drug bill provision which allows homeless to use food stamps to pay for meals at public or private nonprofit shelters. The Department of Labor is also drafting rules designating homeless individuals as a target group under the Job Training Partnership Act.

So I see a lot of movement, that the administration is involved in, and I think that if we can get the services they are entitled to, to the people out there, then I think you can start to develop at the local level some kind of funding through this mechanism. If you can get 10 chronically mentally ill people, and there are many models out there, as you will see as you get more in—maybe you already know—as you get more involved in this area of homelessness. And then if they are getting SSI benefits, then you can set up the shelters.

The other thing I have seen in the last 3 years is the States have homeless task forces and cities have homeless task forces, and a lot of people are addressing it. And so we have to stay very close to the local nonprofits in the private sector to make sure that we are able to address such a diverse group. But this is certainly going to help, and I think—we think it is a good thing.

Senator CRANSTON. Thank you very much.

Mr. Kleiman, you have been given a responsibility for trying to make Department of Defense properties available for homeless people.

Could you submit in writing to us a statement of exactly what has been accomplished thus far and what more might be done, or do you expect can be done, and what the practical problems are in connection with that approach and what kind of property would best serve the purpose and what, if anything, we can do, legislative-

ly, to facilitate that particular effort? We will give you in writing the request. If you could do that fairly soon, I would appreciate it.

[The following information was subsequently submitted for the record:]

INSERT FOR THE RECORD					
HOUSE / SENATE: APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE		HOUSE / SENATE: ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE		HOUSE / SENATE: OTHER	
HEARING DATE: February 5, 1987	TRANSCRIPT PAGE NO.: 139	LINE NO.: 21	INSERT NO.: 1		

SHELTER FOR THE HOMELESS

Question: Mr. Kleiman, you have been given responsibility for trying to make Department of Defense properties available for homeless people.

Could you submit in writing to us a statement of exactly what has been accomplished thus far and what more might be done, or do you expect can be done, and what the practical problems are in connection with that approach and what kind of property would best serve the purpose and what, if anything we can do, legislatively, to facilitate that particular effort? We will give you in writing the request. If you could do that fairly soon, I would appreciate it.

(The information Follows:)

In 1984 the Defense Department worked with Congressman Dan Daniel to develop the language for the shelter for the homeless statute that guides our program. Section 2546 of Title 10 to the U.S. Code permits the Secretary of a Military Department to make installations under his jurisdiction available for the furnishing of shelters. Incident to the establishment of a shelter, the Military Department may provide services such as utilities, bedding, security, transportation, renovation of facilities, minor repairs undertaken specifically to make suitable space available and property liability insurance without reimbursement. The law further states that the establishment of a shelter should not interfere with military preparedenss or ongoing military functions. That means that sometimes the days and hours that a military facility can be made available do not coincide with the needs of the community. For example, they may have needed facilities around the clock when we could only make them available from evening until morning. Since 1983, the Defense Department has opened 11 shelters on military installations. These shelters are located at the Naval Reserve Center, Lawrence, MA; the Naval Air Station, Corpus Christi, TX; Kirtland Air Force Base, Albuquerque, NM; Army Reserve Center, Philadelphia, PA; Camp Parks Army Reserve Base, Alameda County, CA; Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Forest Glen Annex, MD; Fort Jackson, Columbia, SC; an Army Warehouse, Seattle, WA; the Washington Navy Yard, Washington, D.C.; Fort Monmouth, NJ; and Fort Belvoir, Fairfax County, VA. Two more are under construction and scheduled to open later this year at Fort Meade, MD and Camp Kilmer Army Reserve Center, NJ. The Defense Department is currently reviewing three more proposals for its FY 1987 program. To date, Defense has spent over $2.9 million to renovate and repair defense buildings on defense installations. Over the last four years Defense has provided, at no charge, thousands of blankets and cots to shelter operators all over the nation along with other articles of bedding such as pillow cases and sheets. The Department also continually makes surplus defense

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property available to state governments through the General Services Administration Federal Surplus Property Program. Furniture, fixtures, window treatments, and clothing may be obtained from the state agent for surplus property in each respective state.

The Defense Department also helps to feed the homeless. Since 1983, Defense has donated over four million pounds of unused food to food banks throughout the country.

The Department of Defense, utilizing the authority contained in Section 2546 of Title 10, has all the legislation it needs to make Defense facilities available to shelter the homeless.

The overall Federal effort could be enhanced with the designation of a lead agency with responsibility for identifying the requirements of state and local governments and then resolving these requirements. All requests for food, excess real property, excess personal property, emergency relief funds, etc. could be directed to this Federal focal point. A fully coordinated Federal response, using all of the programs & resources available, could then be mobilized to assist those in need. A civil agency such as HHS, HUD or FEMA might be appropriate for this role. Another option would be to use the Federal Task Force on the Homeless for this purpose.

Senator CRANSTON. I want to thank each of you for your appearance this morning.

I do want to stress that there is, in my view, and shared by the members of this committee and Members of the Senate and the House too, a great and growing problem that needs attention and needs more than minimal attention. We will be doing our best to see that that happens. It is really outrageous that so many veterans and mentally ill people and people working and people who have had success in their lives at one time or another are now suffering in this way, and we intend to do what we can to remedy it.

I thank you all very, very much.

Mr. VIETH. Thank you very much.

Senator CRANSTON. We are pleased to have major veterans organizations that represent the men and women who have served their country, now, on this panel. Paul Egan of the American Legion, Gordon Thorson of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, Ronald Drach, Disabled American Veterans and Richard Weidman, Vietnam Veterans of America.

We welcome you all and appreciate very much your testimony.

Who is going to go first?

Mr. EGAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator CRANSTON. Please adhere to the 5-minute rule, because we are really getting into a time bind.

STATEMENT OF PAUL S. EGAN, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION, THE AMERICAN LEGION

Mr. EGAN. In your opening statement, Mr. Chairman, you indicated your intention to introduce legislation next week which would take several steps to get the VA more aggressively involved in addressing the problems of homelessness among veterans. I would like to recommend that you add one further step to that legislation, and that would be to specifically prohibit the VA from continuing with its current practice of imposing a cost accounting system, diagnostic related groups, on the practice of inpatient pyschiatry in VA medical centers.

ACUTE CARE MODEL IS IN ERROR

What is happening is that the model that is being used is an acute care model. Unfortunately, the patients that are being treated are chronic patients, and as a result, patients who should be hospitalized for longer periods of time are being discharged prematurely. So in effect, what VA is doing is repeating the errors that were made in the 1960's up through today of deinstitutionalizing people who really aren't prepared to get the services that they need in the communities they are discharged to.

Would you be willing to do that?

Senator CRANSTON. We have a GAO study ongoing now of that problem, and we will be looking into it.

Mr. EGAN. Very good.

The statistics on homelessness among veterans are somewhat lacking, but from what we can gather from the data that we have reviewed, there are somewhere between 250,000 and 3 million homeless, total, including veterans, some 30 to 50 percent of whom

are veterans. Most are under the age of 40, which makes them Vietnam and Vietnam-era veterans. At least one study indicated that of those veterans that were surveyed, they had something over 3 years of military service and most of them were honorably discharged.

Now why are these people homeless? Well, from the standpoint of the veterans' community, those veterans that are homeless, we believe are still experiencing psychological readjustment problems. Certainly, many of them have employment problems. They are displaced workers. They are workers who have been involved in work with industries where many of the jobs in this country that have been lost and have not been replaced by equal paying jobs. They are individuals who are obviously underemployed. And those people, unfortunately, are not picked up by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, because those figures reflect only those individuals who are completely unemployed and those people who are looking for work.

Obviously, we have an economy in tremendous transition. You might even liken it to the circumstances in the 1930's. In some instances, you have groups of veterans building base camps near the construction sites where they work in the daytime.

According to a study released by the Joint Economic Committee, fully three-fifths of all the new jobs created in the U.S. economy between 1979 and 1984 are low-wage paying jobs. Now for the displaced worker who is used to getting $25,000, $30,000 a year working in a factory, making automobiles, rubber, something of that nature, the job that he is likely to find to replace that income is going to be unable to help him continue to make his mortgage payments or his rent payments or whatever housing payments he has.

According to a GAO report in 1985, the causes of homelessness are several. There are six. First of all, is the increased unemployment in the late 1970's and the early 1980's, and those, of course, are the displaced workers in the main, the deinstitutionalization of mentally ill, combined with lack of community resources to take care of those people, increases in personal crises, which are defined by divorce, a release from jail, stranded while traveling, domestic violence, fire and health-related problems. Fourth is cuts in public assistance programs, a fifth is a decline in low-income housing, and sixth is alcohol and drug abuse.

Now in our judgment, the Federal response to the problem of homelessness in this country ought to take two tracks, the first of which is to recognize that we have an emergency and that it needs to be treated immediately. The legislation that passed in the House 2 days ago and the legislation that is now being contemplated over in the House, H.R. 558, those are on the order of an emergency response to the problem.

But the long-term response must recognize that we do have a serious problem with displaced workers. We need programs to deal with those people. We need programs that will train those people to allow them to find jobs with incomes equal to or nearly equal to the jobs that they had prior to being displaced.

I was kind of interested to hear in the testimony of the mayor from Louisville that the U.S. Government has no Federal housing policy. That may very well be true, but I think it is also true that

local jurisdictions have practically no housing policy either, and it is a mistake to assume that the Federal Government must alone bear all the responsibility for homelessness in this country.

I see that my time is expired, and I will comply with the rules.

[The complete prepared statement of Paul S. Egan follows:]

Statement of

The American Legion

1608 K STREET, N. W.
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20006

Statement of

PAUL S. EGAN, DEPUTY DIRECTOR
NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION
THE AMERICAN LEGION

before the

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HOUSING & URBAN AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING AND URBAN AFFAIRS
UNITED STATES SENATE

on

HOMELESSNESS

JANUARY 29, 1987

Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee, The American Legion appreciates this opportunity to present its views on the subject of homelessness in America generally and homelessness among veterans specifically. Your decision to hold this oversight hearing with a view toward formulating a legislative approach to homelessness abatement is commendable and we are hopeful that the veterans' perspective will be given the weight it deserves in whatever legislative remedy you finally devise.

In your letter of invitation, you asked that we provide the Subcommittee with our views on the size of the homeless problem, the recently released report by the U.S. Conference of Mayors, the respective responsibilities of local, state and federal governments in responding to the problem of homelessness, the housing shortage's effect on the problem and what steps might be taken by the federal government given current fiscal constraints. This statement will address each of these questions, but first we will describe what we believe to be a shocking, albeit possibly inadvertent, insensitivity to the problem by the Veterans Administration (VA).

By now, Mr. Chairman, it is a commonly understood fact that mental illness accounts for a substantial portion of the homeless population. It is further understood that deinstitutionalization of the mentally ill is a leading cause of homelessness. These facts notwithstanding, VA continues to apply Diagnosis Related Groups (DRG) criteria to the practice of inpatient psychiatry at VA medical centers. In doing so, the VA is wittingly or unwittingly contributing to growth in the numbers of homeless veterans.

Under the DRG system, individual facilities are penalized each year through the loss of allocated resources, personnel or both if patients are hospitalized in excess of the maximum number of days prescribed by the DRG model for individual categories of mental illness. As a result, this has constituted a potent incentive to discharge patients prematurely to avoid fiscal penalties.

In our view, applying the DRG cost accounting system to the practice of psychiatry

is ill-advised but even it were appropriate, the DRG model used by VA holds that patients be treated in an acute care manner. What this means is that emphasis is misdirected toward short hospital stays. This practice, however, ignores the fact that many, if not most, VA psychiatric inpatients are afflicted with severe chronic mental illness. When chronic psychiatric patients are treated as if they were acutely ill, the result is premature discharge. In the well known absence of sufficient community mental health resources to care for these individuals, the potential for eventually becoming homeless is great. The potential for premature discharge and eventual homelessness among psychiatric patients is so predictable that HHS has specifically abandoned the application of prospective payment cost accounting (DRG by another name) to psychiatric patients receiving care under the auspices of Medicare, Medicaid and SSI.

Against this background, the VA has no present mechanism to follow-up on the progress or deterioration of the patients it discharges. Typically, discharged patients are referred to halfway houses or other community facilities, but the VA has no practical mechanism in place to statistically measure what happens to these veterans unless the person is subsequently readmitted to a VA facility.

Presumably in response to criticism of the VA's handling of homeless veterans by activists for homeless individuals, the VA did issue a directive on April 27, 1985 outlining services to be provided. In that directive, the directors of all VA medical care facilities were "urged to establish effective programs to assist homeless veterans requiring temporary shelter." The American Legion believes that the VA must do more than simply "urge" its field components. In that regard, we would be very interested to learn what the result of this initiative has been, whether it is working, whether any statistical measurements of the problem resulted, what improvements the VA might suggest and whether or not any crossmatching of homeless individuals presenting themselves at VA facilities with discharged VA psychiatric patients has been undertaken.

It is ironic that the VA's practice of treating chronic patients as if they were acute closely mirrors the mistakes made beginning in the 1960's and continuing to the present day, as the nation has undertaken to deinstitutionalize psychiatric patients from state facilities. When all of this began, it was assumed that adequate community resources existed to accommodate the need and that the dawn of psychoactive drugs could miraculously allow chronically ill patients to function outside of the institutional environment. We now know that each of these assumptions were overly optimistic. Those discharged from institutions turned out to be the least able to afford what services were available in communities across the nation and psychoactive drugs, though useful, have not brought about a decline in either demand or need for care that continues to be in short supply. As a result, it is now estimated that fully a third of the homeless are mentally ill.

The undesirable results of deinstitutionalization were unforeseen. In the case of VA's application of DRG's, however, the results are clearly foreseeable as a matter of historical experience making it inexcusable for VA to continue their application to psychiatry. In your capacity as Chairman of this Subcommittee or as Chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, we urge you to insist that VA cease its current practice of imposing DRG's on psychiatric treatment of veterans.

Apart from this particular shortcoming, the overall available data on homelessness indicates the population of homeless veterans to range between 30 to 50 percent of the total and the average age of these veterans is under 40. Most of these veterans must, therefore, be of the Vietnam era and what little veteran-specific data that are available show the vast majority of these individuals to have been discharged honorably after over three years of service.

This comes as no surprise to The American Legion but may surprise critics who believe veterans already have too many services, that there is little need for present service levels, that Vietnam veterans are now completely readjusted or that existing programs (particularly psychological readjustment and job training programs) ought to be

phased out.

From the standpoint of those who attempt to assess and measure homelessness, unemployment and underemployment is another major contributor. Job programs for veterans have been particularly vulnerable to elimination in recent years as unemployment rates for veterans, measured by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) have periodically improved. According to the BLS figures over the last year, for example, the unemployment rate among Vietnam-era veterans is well below the national average and is better than at nearly any time since 1979. Yet, a careful examination of a variety of indicators (including other BLS data) demonstrate that there is and continues to be a hidden group of unemployed veterans which the published BLS data do not reflect. To be counted as unemployed, a person must be both unemployed and looking for work during the survey week. Thus the survey ignores the underemployed as well as the unemployed who have ceased looking for work. These are, nonetheless, the very characteristics found so frequently among the homeless. Moreover, if 250,000 to 500,000 persons are homeless on a given night, and over a third of these are veterans, then there are at least 80,000 to 160,000 veterans with severe employment problems; problems not being addressed in any meaningful way by any existing federal employment program.

What applies to veterans, in that regard, applies equally to non-veterans. The nation's economy is undergoing a major restructuring from an industrial economy to a service economy. This means that jobs in heavy industry are being completely lost. In those areas of the country relying on the petroleum industry, recession still lingers. The individuals formerly employed in these industries have been displaced from relatively good paying jobs, but the new jobs added to the economy do not pay nearly as well. According to a recent study done for the Joint Economic Committee entitled The Great American Job Machine, three fifths of the jobs added to the U.S. economy between 1979 and 1984 were low wage-paying jobs. For those having been displaced, veterans and non-veterans alike, it is suspected that loss of new income high enough to equal that of prior employment has contributed significantly to loss of homes through foreclosure and subsequent homelessness.

Departing from the psychiatric and readjustment problems of homeless veterans and the general transition of the nation's economy as a cause of homelessness generally, no one has agreed on the number of homeless individuals there are across the country. Estimates range between 250,000 and 3 million, but the more important questions to be answered are the fundamental causes and complexities of the problem. Without accurate answers to these, the programs designed to provide assistance will face an uncertain future.

In its report on The Continued Growth of Hunger, Homelessness and Poverty in America's Cities, the U.S. Conference of Mayors point to increases in demand for food assistance, emergency shelter and housing along with increases in the numbers of poor people. It further points to the fact that the nation's economic recovery has failed to help the hungry, homeless or other low income people in 90 percent of the cities surveyed. What is seemingly implied by this is an apparent judgment that the primary responsibility for developing and implementing programs to alleviate homelessness resides with the federal government rather than with state or municipal governments. The American Legion is neutral on this particular judgment, but if the Congress accepts it and it later is shown to have been an incorrect one, some of the programs developed may be unsuccessful and very costly.

The General Accounting Office (GAO), in a 1985 report entitled Homelessness: A Complex Problem and the Federal Response, cites several factors affecting homelessness. These include increased unemployment in the late 1970's and early 1980's (displaced workers described above, 26 percent of whom are veterans), deinstitutionalization of mentally ill combined with insufficient community-based services, increases in personal crises (divorce, release from jail, stranded while traveling, domestic violence, fires and health-related problems), cuts in public assistance programs,

Senator CRANSTON. Thank you very much. Who is next? Mr. Thorson.

STATEMENT GORDON R. THORSON, SPECIAL ASSISTANT, NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE SERVICE, VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. THORSON. Mr. Chairman, it is truly an honor and privilege to have this opportunity to appear before you and express our concern over the plight of our Nation's homeless.

I represent the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the 2.7 million men and women of our great organization and its ladies auxiliary.

First of all, we would like to thank you for scheduling this hearing, and we respectfully request that the entire contents of our written testimony be made a permanent part of the record.

Please note that at our most recent national convention held in August in Minneapolis, MN, our voting delegates passed a resolution specifically addressing the homeless veteran. Our resolution directs us, members of the VFW, to participate in aiding homeless veterans and to promote services for these unfortunate patriots.

I will not burden you by repeating my entire prepared testimony; however, I would like to take a minute to point out our major concerns.

We are concerned with the growing number of homeless now roaming this land with no place to go and nowhere to turn. The homeless, many of whom are veterans—and after listening to the testimony today, it appears that anywhere from 30 to 50 percent are veterans—but they include also the mentally ill, the alcoholic, the drug abuser, the old, the sick, the poor and even families with children.

CONFERENCE OF MAYORS REPORT

No one appears to know the exact numbers, however, recent reports such as the Conference of Mayors report, clearly identify a large and ever-growing tragedy. The United States of America is the richest Nation on Earth. Our economy has been improving over the last few years, yet men, women, and children are going without the basic necessities of life. They are sleeping in the streets and often going hungry. This Nation can no longer turn its back on the homeless and pretend that they don't exist. Common decency dictates that action must be taken to provide the basic resources needed to survive: Decent shelter and adequate food.

Additional action should be taken to medically and mentally evaluate, treat, counsel, rehabilitate and finally employ this human resource.

Homelessness is not just a veteran issue, not just a Washington, DC, issue. This tragedy affects the entire Nation, every State, every city. The VFW doesn't have all the answers, but we will certainly contribute to a solution. We call on all levels of government, all service organizations and all citizens of this Nation to work together toward a long-term solution.

Thank you, sir.

[The complete prepared statement of Gordon R. Thorson follows:]

decline in low income housing supply and alcohol and drug abuse. Presumably, nothing has changed since the 1985 report that would add or detract from the basic causes of homelessness cited by GAO.

From the causes highlighted in the GAO report, notwithstanding the enlargement of the problem outlined by the Conference of Mayors survey, it is apparent that responses to some aspects of homelessness should properly fall within the near-exclusive jurisdiction of state and local, rather than federal, government jurisdiction. Perhaps the best example of this is deinstitutionalization of mentally ill persons combined with inadequate community-based services for them. Other causes of homelessness seem appropriately to lend themselves to shared responsibility.

Increased unemployment in the late 1970's and early 1980's reflects a failure on the part of our federal policies to assist displaced workers in a meaningful way that offers training for jobs with salaries commensurate with jobs lost. Similarly, the inability of our industrial sector to compete with foreign industries has contributed to the general decline in some of our most traditionally basic industries. On the other hand, some state and local jurisdictions have failed to broaden their economic bases. Oil producing and processing states are among the best examples and the result of sudden decline in these industries has been a devastation of the local labor force.

Another cause of homelessness that seems appropriate for shared responsibility is the decline in low-income housing supplies. Obviously reductions over the last six years in federally-assisted low-income housing programs have taken their toll. However, local jurisdictions seem to have done a poor job in land use planning as cities across the country have undertaken a major redevelopment of downtown areas. The result has so depleted the stocks of low-income housing that tens of thousands of individuals simply cannot afford housing. The growth in full and part-time workers cited by the Conference of Mayors report who are homeless is the result. So it is also with the growth of homeless families.

Reductions in public assistance programs, both federal and state, represent yet another example of a homelessness cause that is a shared responsibility. In a very real sense, what constituted a legislative safety net of federal programs in the early 1980's has become tattered by increases in basic costs of living such as housing, food, utilities and so on.

In our view, the proper role for the federal government to play in relieving the growing problem of homelessness must be two-tracked. What we see on our city streets is an emergency situation that must be addressed immediately. The House of Representatives has already responded to the emergency by passing legislation, H.J. Res. 102, just two days ago to transfer $50 million from the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) disaster relief program to its food and shelter program. Other agencies that made commitments to lend assistance to local jurisdictions such as DoD, HHS, HUD, Agriculture, VA and ACTION should be encouraged to augment their actions vigorously, especially for the balance of the winter months.

The second track the federal government should undertake is a more comprehensive nationally oriented approach directed at the plight of displaced workers, competitiveness in industry, increased worker productivity through programs to combat illiteracy, upgrading and or refining of low-income support systems and perhaps tax disincentives to prevent poor land use and development planning in local jurisdictions.

With new infusions of emergency federal assistance the cities can alleviate the problem. Individual cities are better prepared than the federal government to innovatively respond to the homelessness crisis. This much is evidenced by a June 1986 report of the U.S. Conference of Mayors entitled Responding to Homelessness in America's Cities. That report, a catalog of the responses to homelessness by city governments and private groups in 23 cities across the country, suggests a variety of local approaches to homelessness that are tailored to the specific needs and exigencies of each jurisdiction surveyed. It seems unlikely that the federal government would be able

to formulate a national program capable of addressing local peculiarities as well as the local city governments have already done. Indeed, this is not to say that federal assistance is undesirable. That assistance is needed but individual cities must be given the latitude and discretion to implement specific programs of their own design.

Obviously, it will be necessary to spend federal dollars to alleviate homelessness on both a short and long-term basis. Today's fiscal constraints may make decisions to do so difficult. Nevertheless, the problems of homelessness is with us as a nation and the problem is growing. It is, therefore, critically important that whatever initiatives undertaken by the federal government be properly directed at the underlying causes of growth in the homeless population. To do otherwise risks the expenditure of too much on programs holding too little promise of long-term homelessness abatement.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, you have asked us to participate in today's hearings and to make comments on a variety of matters affecting homelessness that depart from the mainstream of issues principally important to the veterans community. Nevertheless, we attach considerable importance to homelessness among veterans and non-veterans alike. The comments we offer in this statement reflect our experience in attempting to formulate programs to alleviate long-term national problems directly affecting veterans. Just a few of these initiatives include development of the Veterans Job Training Act, the Job Training Partnership Act, Targeted Jobs Tax Credit program, various illiteracy programs around the nation and psychological readjustment counseling services for veterans of the Vietnam era. In our judgment, the experiences of The American Legion in efforts to solve some of the most nagging and mettlesome problems facing veterans ought to give added credibility to our prescribed approach to controlling the problem of homelessness in America today.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes our statement.

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

STATEMENT OF

GORDON R. THORSON, SPECIAL ASSISTANT
NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE SERVICE
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND URBAN AFFAIRS
OF THE
COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING AND URBAN AFFAIRS
UNITED STATES SENATE

WITH RESPECT TO

HOMELESSNESS IN AMERICA

WASHINGTON, D. C. JANUARY 29, 1987

MR. CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE:

It is a privilege to appear and testify before this important Senate Subcommittee. As a Special Assistant on our legislative staff, it is my duty to represent the 2.7 million men and women of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States and its Ladies Auxiliary at this hearing. I am charged with the responsibility of advancing the position of our organization as it applies to homelessness in America and more specifically homeless veterans.

The Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States is appalled by the growing number of homeless in this most wealthy nation. During our most recent National Convention held last August, the membership of our great organization passed Resolution Number 670, "Homeless Veterans." This resolution clearly outlines the VFW's position: **We will participate in aiding homeless veterans and promote or solicit the VA, HHS, DOD and other agencies to provide services to veterans.** (A copy of VFW Resolution Number 670 is attached.)

Mr. Chairman, your invitation to this Subcommittee hearing indicates a desire to understand the problems of homeless Americans and five questions were advanced to establish the loose parameters of this hearing, you asked:

What is the size and nature of homelessness in the U. S.?

Unfortunately, this organization is not in a position to accurately identify the size or nature of homelessness. We have read studies that estimate anywhere from one half million to three million people are homeless. We have heard estimates that one quarter to one half of these people are U. S. military veterans, 28 percent are families with children, 29 percent are chronically mentally ill, 29 percent are substance abusers, the list goes on. One thing becomes evident, the numbers are steadily growing.

What is your assessment of the U. S. Conference of Mayor's recent report "The Continued Growth of Hunger, Homeless and Poverty in America's Cities: 1986"?

We are shocked! Even a quick review of this report causes much concern. It appears as though the current economic recovery does not extend to include the poor. Demands for emergency food assistance, emergency shelter, and low-income housing are rising to unprecedented levels, a growing precentage of the homeless are families with children and, we as a nation, are not meeting these needs. The Conference of Mayor's report has clearly identified a need. The solution won't be quite as easy.

What steps to relieve the problems of homeless Americans are most urgently needed?

Focus should be directed toward two basic areas. First of all steps should be taken to slow or stop the increasing number of homeless, the so called social service safety net needs repair. We must take steps to quickly

identify the main causes of homelessness and then implement measures to remedy these problems. Secondly, we must provide housing, basic health care, counseling and vocational rehabilitation and employment opportunities for those thousands who are already homeless.

What are the responsibilities of local, state and federal governments in meeting the needs of the homeless?

All levels of government must work together and coordinate their efforts to provide basic human needs to include affordable housing, food, health care, counseling, and vocational rehabilitation and employment opportunities.

To what extent does a shortage of affordable housing for low-income Americans contribute to homelessness?

The scarcity of affordable low income housing appears to be the single most significant cause of homelessness. As the cost of living goes up increasing numbers of poor persons have been literally squeezed out of the housing market and forced into the streets. Once on the street, any sense of self-worth or hope soon fades and it then becomes extremely difficult to rejoin the mainstream. Having a place to live is more than just a matter of shelter, its more than just protection from the elements; having affordable housing helps reestablish a sense of self-worth and pride and only this will allow the homeless an opportunity to rejoin society.

However, providing affordable housing is only the first step in the rehabilitation of the homeless. The homeless have sunk to the very bottom of society. These people must endure a harsh existence and many suffer from chronic mental illness and substance abuse. They generally display behavior that violates the accepted norms of society, this often results in society using punitive action to address this disinfranchised group. Before these

individuals can be returned to a meaningful role in society, much long-term readjustment and rehabilitation must take place. The homeless are not job ready and will not be quickly assimilated back into a working society.

By all reports a significant segment of the homeless population are veterans. These men and women once served their country honorably but now must wander the streets of this nation, outcast in their own land. They have fallen on bad times and now need this nation's assistance. How can this highly civilized nation turn its back on these special Americans, our veterans, and their families and children? These homeless veterans are human beings, individuals who have sacrificed for the good of the nation, we may no longer deny their existence nor their need.

The Veterans of Foreign Wars believes that the Administrator of Veterans Affairs should assume the leadership role in the development, coordination and implementation of programs provided to assist homeless veterans. The Veterans Administration is the principal advocate for America's veterans. The stated mission of the VA is to serve America's veterans and their families with dignity and compassion thus ensuring that they receive the care, support and recognition earned in doing service to this nation. The VA has established a series of broad goals to serve as standards in carrying out its mission. These goals include providing an appropriate level of benefits to eligible veterans and beneficiaries, exercising leadership within the federal government to represent the concerns and needs of veterans and their families to ensure excellence in the quality of service provided to all of America's veterans.

Based upon our limited contact with the homeless through our Department Service Officers, we find that homeless veterans, generally, are aware of

the benefits and agencies available to assist them. They know where to obtain shelter and subsistence. They tend to shun shelters out of fear of their contemporaries. They refuse to deal with the bureaucracy, and look only to their individual immediate needs. We are concerned that the large number of homeless veterans, indicates that the veteran, regardless of era, who endured extensive combat, may have a propensity toward readjustment difficulties, including unemployment and substance abuse. Homelessness is just one additional step toward total alienation from society.

Unfortunately, Veterans Benefits Counselors have been significantly reduced in the recent past, these individuals are key components to reaching out to the homeless. They can identify those veterans who qualify for assistance by the Veterans Administration. They can provide counseling to those with less than honorable discharges on the correct procedures to attempt to upgrade discharges and conduct referral to other agencies such as the Social Security Administration or HHS Public Health Service Programs. Eligible veterans can be referred as appropriate to Readjustment Counseling, alcohol and drug dependence treatment programs and other medical service programs. It should be noted that the Veterans Administration Alcohol and Drug Dependence Treatment program has a very high success rate with its rehabilitation efforts. The Veterans Administration could enroll eligible veterans into Vocational Rehabilitation Training and, as appropriate, assist them in applying for compensation or pension. Vet Centers can provide a critical outreach and counseling service to these homeless veterans and should continue to function and be tasked accordingly.

It is now time for the appropriate agency, the Veterans Administration, to take the lead in resolving the homeless veteran issue. Now is not the time to

allow the erosion of VA services. Full utilization of available services with an eye towards redistribution of government funding and talent, as needed, is of paramount importance to meet the ever increasing needs of our veteran population.

The Employment and Training Administration of the Department of Labor should coordinate their efforts with the VA to ensure that the homeless veteran, at the appropriate time in his evaluation, is then channeled into suitable employment programs and given preferential services.

The Veterans of Foreign Wars will continue to monitor the efforts of all government agencies charged with the responsibility of serving this nation's veterans. We stand ready to cooperate with any concentrated effort to identify and assist the homeless of our nation. Thank you.

Resolution No. 670

HOMELESS VETERANS

WHEREAS, recent surveys and studies reveal a large number of homeless veterans in the homeless population, not only in large metropolitan areas, but smaller rural areas as well; and

WHEREAS, to have a homeless population in the U.S. is a national blight and to have a homeless veteran population is an embarrassment to an organization of veterans; and

WHEREAS, many of this homeless population are there due to the poor economic situation which now faces our country; now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, by the 87th National Convention of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, that we participate in aiding homeless veterans and promote or solicit the VA, HHS, DOD and other agencies to provide services to these veterans.

Adopted by the 87th National Convention of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, held in Minneapolis, Minnesota, August 15-22, 1986.

Resolution No. 670

Senator CRANSTON. Thank you very much.

STATEMENT OF RONALD W. DRACH, NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT DIRECTOR, DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

Mr. DRACH. Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the DAV, I want to thank you for holding these hearings and allowing us to appear before you. I would also like to express our appreciation of the fact that you are back in the Chair looking into some of these issues that affect our Nation's veterans that have been neglected over the last several years.

Senator CRANSTON. Thank you very much.

Mr. DRACH. As has been indicated throughout the hearing, the quality of data on veterans tends to compound the problem in terms of trying to find out what some of the problems are and how we address them.

We looked at some of the studies that are available and found that homeless veterans include the World War II, Korean, and Vietman veterans. Most of the studies indicate that the average age of the homeless, veterans included, is approximately 34. One study at the Long Island Shelter in Boston found that "Homeless veterans tended to be older, white males." Now that is only one study.

HOMELESS VIETNAM VETERANS

In Baltimore, it was found that 51 percent of the homeless had reported some military service, 36 percent of whom were of the Vietnam era. Los Angeles County reported 48 percent of homeless males were veterans.

It is also interesting that in Los Angeles, it was indicated that several of the post-Vietnam era veterans became homeless after discharge from military service.

Studies in Baltimore, Detroit, Los Angeles, Ohio, Phoenix, and San Francisco, found that of their homeless veterans, Vietnam-era veterans comprised 35 percent, 15, 33, 28, 36, and 33 percent, respectively. That averages out to about 30 percent. So at least in those six cities, the average Vietnam-era veteran population is around 30 percent. And I think as has been indicated, approximately 50 percent of all homeless have some veteran status.

The Ohio Department of Mental Health did a study and indicated that, quote:

> Our data clearly support the multiple problem and multiple cause nature of the phenomenon. On the other hand, it is equally clear that the system has substantially failed to meet or even address the needs of this population.

I think that kind of puts the blame or the onus, if you will, on everybody and not just one particular government agency or one particular service delivery system, but everybody has to pull their weight.

Some interesting but rather disturbing data was also found in Ohio although 30 percent of the homeless veterans that had been hospitalized for emotional or psychiatric problems, only 6.1 percent were hospitalized at a VA medical facility. In Baltimore, only 7.8 percent of the homeless reported that their usual source of medical care was a VA facility, yet 51 percent of these individuals are vet-

erans. It would appear that they would have prima facie eligibility for VA medical care, by the very nature of their status.

In Baltimore—they concluded:

> However, it seems clear that VA benefits, including health services, though available in major cities where the homeless congregate, are underutilized. Whether this underutilization is due to specific barriers to care within the VA system or operates according to rules that govern health seeking behavior for the homeless in general is less clear and warrants further investigation.

We hope that in your hearings in your bill you will pursue that issue with the VA to find out what those problems really are.

I don't want to belabor the issue with more statistics. They are in my prepared statement, which will be submitted for the record.

Another disturbing figure I would like to mention is that in the Baltimore study, 24 percent reported that they had a service-related disability—24 percent of the homeless veterans reported a service-related disability. Certainly, this is a very disproportionately high number of service-connected disabled veterans in the total population. So I think we need to look further to find out why so many service-connected disabled veterans are in that category.

Perhaps the most positive thing that we saw or the DAV has seen happen recently was initiated by Assistant Secretary of Labor Shasteen and his jobs for homeless veterans project. We initiated an effort to our people in the same 10 regional offices in those 10 cities telling our people to cooperate with the Assistant Secretary's people. I did an informal poll of those 10 offices about a month ago, and only three had been contacted by anybody at the Department of Labor. So while the initiative is to be commended, the rapidity or the lack of rapidity with which it is moving is not to be commended. I think they need to beef that up a little bit.

And just one last statement, if I may, Mr. Chairman. I know my time is up. If you didn't know, I would like the record to reflect the fact that about a month ago, the Disabled American Veterans donated a specially medically equipped van to the District of Columbia government to provide acute medical care on the spot to homeless people, particularly homeless veterans, in the District of Columbia. Also it provides a mode of transportation for those who need chronic care to take them to hospitals.

Thank you very much.

[The complete statement of Ronald W. Drach follows:]

Senator CRANSTON. Thank you very much. Mr. Weidman.

STATEMENT OF RICHARD WEIDMAN, VIETNAM VETERANS OF AMERICA

Mr. WEIDMAN. Mr. Chairman, I might say, on behalf of Vietnam Veterans of America, that we are also delighted to again be able to call you "Mr. Chairman" and all that that will mean in a positive sense for America's veterans.

To try and avoid going over ground covered ably by my colleagues, I would just like to note a number of things. Our estimate is that there are roughly 85,000 hard-core—meaning 6 months or more—homeless veterans, the overwhelming majority of whom are Vietnam vets, and there are over 250,000 or 300,000 homeless veterans at any given time during a year.

The numbers game is something that we have been reluctant to get into playing, but it is something going back and forth between our organization and the Administrator of Veterans Affairs, meaning the lack of "hard data." It is our contention that we are never going to get "hard data," by the very nature, transient nature of the homeless veterans population. However many thousands it is, it is one heck of a lot of veterans who are not being addressed whose problems are not being addressed, which leads to the next category.

APATHY OF THE VA

In the discussions going back over the last 2 years with the Veterans Administration, the rejoinder has been to us, why should we do something for homeless vets? From which group of veterans would you take away current benefits, in order to make homeless vets a new priority category? Our response to that is that homeless vets are not folks who drop down here from Mars. They are, in fact, veterans whose problems have become so acute that they have ended up in a state of homelessness, either because of the problem having to do with the resource allocation models and DRG's—which our colleague from the American Legion pointed out this morning—or because of other vet centers not being able to reach these folks, et cetera.

It is not a new category of veterans whatsoever.

Which leads to the main point I want to make in the oral presentation here this morning, which is, and I am reading and quoting, incidentally, from an internal VA memorandum:

> We—
>
> meaning VA—
>
> had informal inquiry from one or two veteran service organizations asking about their inclusion on the Working Group on Homeless Vets. We had responded that there was no effort to exclude them, but that our first responsibility was to get our own house in order from both an administrative and service standpoint.

It could not be said better, Mr. Chairman. The VA, in regard to meeting its responsibilities to homeless vets needs to get its own house in order from both an administrative and service standpoint.

Beginning last September with Senator Daschle held hearings on the House side on this very issue, the Administrator began to ask that an agencywide directive—circular be prepared. It is now the end of January. It's been sitting on the Administrator's desk for over 1 month without action. Everyone down the line, if you will, is waiting for the Administrator to move before they take it as a priority. The key part about this, and this is one thing, at least, with which we can agree with Mr. Vieth is, what happens at the local level is absolutely key. However, VA, even in this directive, is still debating about whether coordinators in each VA regional office should be designated to work in coordination with each VA medical center to establish on-the-ground committees in each locality.

It is our contention that the only way in which we are going to make much of a dent in this problem is, if, in fact, VA takes the leadership once again at the local level that the veterans service organizations will, in fact, respond if VA exercises their leadership in this area.

Last but not least, having to do with VA, I was fascinated by your proposal for taking over some of the hard-to-sell housing stock by the veteran service organizations and other not-for-profit public or private organizations to renovate it for usable housing stock.

It is Vietnam Veterans of America's contention that some of the housing problem, in fact, is being caused by that particular branch of the VA, given the fact that the foreclosures are up, lack of forbearance and the fact that this administration is looking to essentially wreak havoc and through its increasing use of no bid to effectively end the no down payment loan and freeze out people at the bottom end of the market.

I am sure that sometime during the course of this session, Mr. Chairman, you will be having hearings specifically on the VA Home Loan Guaranty Program, so I won't belabor that, except to say that at the same time that this administration is claiming that it is doing a great deal for veterans, in terms of housing, in fact, it is doing everything it can to destroy a program that has worked well for 40 years.

I see my time is up, Mr. Chairman. Once again, thank you for allowing VVA to present its views here this morning and for having this hearing.

Senator CRANSTON. Thank you a great deal.

I thank each of you for your presence and for your testimony, your participation and your activity and concern about homeless veterans and others.

I am going to save my questions until we have the hearing in the Veterans Committee on February 18. I look forward to working closely with you and your organizations on this problem that obviously needs attention, and we have got to get some results, and I look forward to working with you on developing the legislation that I outlined briefly in my opening statement.

Thank you very much.

That concludes today's hearing. I thank all of you who stayed to the end. Thanks a lot.

[Whereupon, at 1:30 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

[Additional material supplied for the record follows:]

NAHRO National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials
1520 Eighteenth Street, Northwest, Washington, D.C. 20036 (202) 555-2020

A Statement

by the

National Association of Housing
and Redevelopment Officials

on

"Assistance for Homeless Persons:
A Growing Responsibility"

January 30, 1987

for the

Subcommittee on Housing and Urban Affairs
Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs
United States Senate

Melvin J. Adams, President. **Helen L. Sause**, Senior Vice President. **Howard T. Byrd**, Vice President—Commissioners. **Joseph E. Gray, Jr.**, Vice President—Community Revitalization and Development. **John Simon**, Vice President—Housing. **Joan Smith**, Vice President—Member Services. **Wayland R. Smith**, Vice President—Professional Development. **Robert W. Maffin**, Executive Director

STATEMENT OF
RONALD W. DRACH
NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT DIRECTOR
DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS
BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND URBAN AFFAIRS
OF THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING
AND URBAN AFFAIRS
January 29, 1987

MR. CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE:

On behalf of the more than one million members of the Disabled American Veterans and its Ladies' Auxiliary, I am pleased to appear before you and offer observations on the status of homeless veterans.

Mr. Chairman, as we all know, there is a paucity of data on this subject which compounds the complexity of the task of trying to serve these individuals. Additionally, because of the very nature of their plight, i.e., homeless, they are much more difficult to contact, let alone provide services and follow-up that will lead to a better lifestyle for them.

We are pleased to provide our views and observations based on the information that has been made available to us or that we have gathered on our own. I would like to address four issues.

No I. -- WHO ARE THE HOMELESS VETERANS?

Mr. Chairman, it would appear from the limited data available that homeless veterans include those from World War II, Korea and Vietnam. It appears from the general profile that the concentration would be among Korean and Vietnam Era veterans. In most of the studies it is generally concluded the average age of the homeless is approximately 34. One exception shows up in a study of homeless at the Long Island Shelter for the Homeless in Boston, Massachusetts which found: "homeless veterans tended to be older white males."

In a study conducted in the Baltimore area it was found that 51% of the homeless had reported some military service, 36% being of the Vietnam Era. Another study conducted in Los Angeles County reported that 48% of homeless males were veterans. Another interesting finding in Los Angeles indicates that several of the post-Vietnam Era veterans became homeless after discharge from military service.

Studies conducted in Baltimore, Detroit, Los Angeles, Ohio, Phoenix and San Francisco found of all the homeless veterans, Vietnam Era veterans comprised 35%, 15%, 33%, 28%, 36% and 33%, respectively. This is an average of 30%. Therefore, it may be reasonable to conclude that approximately one-third of all homeless veterans are of the Vietnam Era.

No. 2 -- WHERE ARE HOMESLESS VETERANS LOCATED?

Again, the data is somewhat sparse and most of the studies appear to have been conducted in urban areas. However, several studies conclude the homeless problem is both urban and rural in nature. While they don't specifically mention rural veterans, we must conclude from the general profile that there are homeless veterans irrespective of the geographic setting.

No. 3 -- WHY ARE THESE VETERANS UNEMPLOYED AND UNABLE TO PPOVIDE SHELTER FOR THEMSELVES?

This question is even more difficult to answer. A study conducted by the Ohio Department of Mental Health perhaps best summarizes the situation: "Our data clearly support the multiple-problem and multiple-cause nature of the phenomenon. On the other hand, it is equally clear that the...system has substantially failed to meet or even address the needs of this population."

This study found the plight of homeless veterans has been brought about by some of the same reasons the non-veteran has become homeless, e.g., alcohol and substance abuse (45.1% in Ohio) and psychiatric problems (the Ohio study found that of the nearly 30% of the homeless that had been hospitalized for emotional or psychiatric problems, 6.1% were hospitalized at a Veterans Administration hospital). However, in the Baltimore study, while 51% of the homeless had served in the military (36% indicated they were Vietnam veterans), only 7.8% of the homeless reported that their usual source of medical care was a VA facility. This is slightly higher than the California study which was restricted to psychiatric hospitalization.

Also, the following from a summary of the Baltimore study helps put issue No. 3 in perspective:

> It is difficult to interpret what role military service might play in the life history of homeless persons, particularly with respect to etiology of homelessness, and little is known about how homeless veterans differ from non-veterans in the population. The alienation experienced by many homeless people may be compounded by the sense of rejection described by some Vietnam veterans and create special problems in resettlement or the escape from homelessness. However, it seems clear that VA benefits, including health services, though available in major cities where the homeless congregate, are under utilized. Whether this underutilization is due to specific barriers to care within the VA system or operates according to rules that govern health seeking behavior for the homeless in general is less clear and warrants further investigation.
>
> Policy implication. Problems of accessibility and acceptability within the VA system should be identified and remedial action taken to correct deficiencies. Where necessary, special services to address the needs of homeless veterans should be developed. In addition to traditional health, mental health and alcoholism treatment services, these services should include outreach, transportation to often remote sites for care, rehabilitation, and resettlement, e.g., into the well-established network of VA adult foster care homes for those too physically or mentally disabled to function independently.

Apparently, the most extensive research done on veterans as a subset of the homeless was the Boston study of the Long Island Shelter for the Homeless. We should point out that the Commonwealth of Massachusetts has already instituted a homeless program for veterans. (This will be discussed later.) The Long Island study surveyed new arrivals and asked why they were homeless. The following represents the responses:

* unemployment -- 20%
* financial problem -- 18%
* legal eviction -- 14%
* alcoholism -- 20%

The Long Island study revealed the following about the veteran homeless population:

* 31% were veterans and 37% of the male population were veterans;
* 19% reported receiving some veterans' benefits;
* of those who had previously resided in Massachusetts, veterans and divorced persons were likely to have been homeless longer than other groups;
* veterans used the shelter at double the rate of male non-veterans;
* 48% of the veteran population who visited the shelter at least once returned at least two additional times per month (this compares with 22% of the non-veteran males);
* veterans were somewhat more likely to have physical health problems;
* homeless veterans tended to be older white males more often divorced and more educated;
* one-third of these veterans had entered the military service prior to 1960 and one-third entered after 1968;
* one-half had left the military since 1970;
* 90% had an honorable discharge and 95% either honorable general discharge;

* half served in the Army;

* 24% reported they had a service-related disability;

* veterans were more likely to have dealt with hospitals and were somewhat less likely to have had contact with alcohol related and social service agencies than non-veterans.

As indicated, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts has initiated a program to serve homeless veterans throughout the state. Apparently, the program has had some success in the areas of assisting homeless to receive employment; housing in foster homes, apartments and rooms; and medical benefits. Additionally, I am informed that Massachusetts has a special income maintenance program for veterans which is available to virtually any veteran in need. One report of services I reviewed indicates that of 132 homeless veterans, 73 received the special state benefits; 21 were placed into unsubsidized employment; 74 were referred to small businesses and other employment resources for possible employment help; 35 were placed in rooms and foster homes; 37 were placed in alcohol, drug and PTSD counseling; 7 were referred for medical services; and 5 were referred for rehabilitation services.

No. 4 -- WHAT IS BEING DONE TO ASSIST THESE VETERANS AND WHAT EFFORTS ARE BEING MADE TO OVERCOME THE BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT THAT EXIST FOR HOMELESS VETERANS?

At the present time, other than the definitive program in Massachusetts for veterans, we are not aware of any other specific outreach efforts to the homeless veteran at a state or local level. We do believe, however, that other programs do exist that have not come to our attention.

The Administration has established a Task Force on the Homeless. They apparently have done very little to assist the

homeless, let alone target veterans. Assistant Secretary of Labor Donald Shasteen should be commended for his efforts in this area. The Assistant Secretary recently initiated a "Jobs for Homeless Veterans" project in ten geographically dispersed cities. While the success of this project is yet to be measured, it has at least been initiated.

The DAV has committed its support to Secretary Shasteen in this project and have contacted our Supervisory National Service Officers in those ten areas, advising them of the project and encouraging them to cooperate. The DAV, through its corps of National Service Officers, can be a definite asset in this effort. Those who are aware of our National Service Program know that we have 248 National Service Officers in 67 cities across the country. These Service Officers provide a multitude of services to veterans and their families. Veterans need not be members of the DAV to take advantage of these services.

Our NSOs also visit towns and cities distant from the Regional Office through our fleet of Field Service Units. These are "mini-vans" and have brought DAV services to more than 400,000 veterans, their dependents and survivors, during the past decade. We not only provide counseling regarding VA disability benefits, rehabilitation programs and other available services, but these NSOs actually represent these individuals in their claims before government agencies. The Disabled American Veterans also has several programs that can be beneficial to homeless veterans. In addition to providing assistance in filing, perfecting and representing claims, our Service Officers provide assistance in obtaining medical care through the VA hospital system, provide monetary emergency relief for those who may be eligible, provide help through our Older Veterans Assistance Program and provide other assistance through our Chapters and Departments.

While we have not surveyed our Departments and Chapters to determine what, if anything, they are doing, we are aware that several have established "soup kitchens" to serve homeless veterans. The Disabled American Veterans stands ready to assist the Department of Labor or any other government agency in addressing the needs of the homeless veteran population.

We have to bear in mind there is no single answer to this multiple issue problem and all agencies, private and public, must be called upon to provide their expertise and respective services. If any one service provider fails to live up to its responsibility, the potential for success is diminished significantly.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my prepared statement and, again, we are happy to have had the opportunity to provide you with our views on this matter. I would be happy to respond to any questions you may have.

The National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials (NAHRO) is pleased to present this statement to the Subcommittee on behalf of over 2,000 local housing and development agencies across the United States. NAHRO members have over 50 years of experience in serving the nation's housing and community development needs.

This statement by NAHRO is based on the findings and recommendations of a "NAHRO Working Group on the Homeless" created by the NAHRO Board of Governors and adopted by the Board in September, 1986. A summary of this report is attached as an appendix and we request that it be filed along with this statement for the record.

Findings of NAHRO Report

The basic findings, as adopted by the NAHRO Board, can be summarized as follows:

--The needs of homeless persons in local communities are urgent and growing, and represent a variety of household types, including children in broken- or one-parent households, as well as the jobless, single older women and men, and the mentally ill.

--From a housing perspective, being without a home is the end product of a rental housing supply that is increasingly inadequate in terms of volume, condition, types of units, and rent levels.

--Traditionally, nonprofit social service organizations have taken major responsibility for assisting the homeless, and they continue to be key agents in providing direct services. But the increased volume and complexity of homeless needs require new involvement by the private sector and by governments.

--There should be a broader range of involvement by the private sector, especially those private entities concerned with the effect of homelessness on the economic, physical, and social well-being of the community. Many private corporations are located in the inner core areas of cities where homelessness has its heaviest impact. They include private foundations, commercial businesses, the banking community, the hotel and insurance industries. They can provide critical support and technical expertise in dealing with such needs as financing housing, employing industry-displaced workers, mobilizing support services, and providing access to vacant structures or sites.

--The public responsibility of assisting homeless persons does not rest with any one level of government; action and resources are required at federal, state, and local levels. However, homelessness is a national problem reflecting the dynamic changes taking place in American industry and employment, as well as demographic shifts. The federal government has a particular responsibility to take a leadership role in developing an ongoing, beyond an emergency, effort to provide short-term, transitional, and permanent housing with appropriate support services for homeless persons. An important aspect of this federal responsibility is to develop a coordinated system, relating federal assistance to state and local resources and efforts.

--A critical aspect of homeless assistance is to coordinate the availability of physical structures for homeless persons with the appropriate support services. The direct linking of support services with housing is, in fact, a critical element in serving all types of "special needs" households in our lower income housing assistance programs of the future, whether they be homeless, frail elderly, single-parent households, or handicapped persons. An issue paper prepared for NAHRO addressed this question (Linking Housing and Human Service Systems, by Elisabeth B. Rosenbaum).

--Local community development agencies and local housing authorities have important skills and resources, particularly in constructing and rehabilitating housing that can be used for homeless persons. Twenty-five case studies developed by NAHRO show that many of these agencies are deeply involved in this effort. However, in public housing there are serious constraints in adapting the program to serve "homeless" needs, including

the existing waiting list, the one-year lease requirement, and need for support services. Some of these same difficulties apply to Section 8 certificates. Both of these programs were designed, and are most useful, in serving permanent housing, rather than emergency or transitional needs. There are also serious constraints in the use of Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), both in terms of fund availability and their use for new housing construction and support services.

NAHRO Recommendations: Federal Government

Based on these findings, NAHRO recommends that the following actions be taken at the federal level:

1. The "emergency" organizational status of federal homeless assistance (under the Federal Emergency Management Agency - FEMA) should be recognized as inadequate, and responsibility places in one permanent federal department, preferably the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). This would include a national board built on the current FEMA Board. Special executive powers and resources should be granted the responsible department to coordinate federal assistance for the homeless and to target it to homeless needs, resources, and programs in the various states and localities. This could require the development of a new federal-state-local assistance system.

2. For the immediate future, federal assistance for homeless persons should be expanded for "Food and Shelter Assistance" (now administered by FEMA); for the new "Emergency Shelter Grant" program of the Department of HUD; and by expanding the "AFDC Emergency Assistance" program of the Department of HHS to support more adequately income and support services for homeless persons.

3. An expanded program of demonstrations should be developed, similar to the "Transitional Housing Demonstration" authorized for HUD in 1986 legislation. This could encourage new ways to link housing and services, and new ways to integrate federal, state, and local homeless efforts.

4. A detailed examination should be undertaken of existing federal housing assistance and social services assistance programs, and recommendations made on how they might be adjusted or expanded to serve homeless needs better, on an emergency, transitional, or permanent basis.

NAHRO Recommendations on H.R. 558, The Urgent Relief for the Homeless Act

NAHRO strongly supports the increased funding set forth for FY 1987 in H.R. 558, including that for FEMA Emergency Food and Shelter and HUD's Emergency Shelter Grant program, and the Transitional Housing Demonstration program. The Association gives conditional support to the 1,300 additional Section 8 certificates with three recommendations: (1) that these certificates be available in "block assignments" to be used in conjunction with housing development and rehabilitation for homeless persons, as well as for individual certificates; this requires clear language in the statute that certificates can be used for single persons and can be attached to structures; (2) that the "housing quality standards" for the certificates be adjusted to reflect homeless shelters and group homes; and (3) that the AFDC "Emergency Assistance Program" of HHS be expanded with additional funding earmarked for homeless persons' income and support services for use in emergency shelters and transitional housing. In addition, the Association does not believe that the establishment of a coordinating office in HHS, as proposed in H.R. 558, would adequately address the federal organizational problem for homeless assistance. NAHRO

favors the establishment of a permanent function of homeless assistance, preferably in the Department of HUD, as described above under "Federal Government Recommendations." However, the Department of HHS should be directed to target "adequate welfare shelter allowances" and support services for homeless persons in emergency, transitional, and permanent housing.

NAHRO Recommendations: State Government

NAHRO has detailed recommendations for state governments, contained in the attached appendix. The following recommendations are highlighted for the immediate future. State governments are encouraged to seriously consider actions to:

1. Adopt or amend the General Assistance (welfare) programs to insure ongoing assistance for persons unable to work or unable to locate work. (Some states now provide such assistance for only up to three months.)

2. Revise any legislative provisions that require deinstitutionalization of persons from state institutions until future planning for their housing and support services is assured. Develop "Transitional Assistance" programs.

3. Restructure General Assistance (welfare) programs to leverage funds used for "Emergency Housing" into longer term (at least annual) leases with shelter operators and landlords (rather than short-term hotels and motels).

4. Leverage both General Assistance (welfare) funds and HHS Emergency funds to stimulate rehabilitation of housing (see Rosenbaum issue paper).

5. Establish special grant or loan programs to assist renovation and new construction of housing for homeless persons (following models in active states).

6. Establish a cabinet level, interdepartmental coordinating committee and develop interdepartmental agreements designed to integrate housing with support services for homeless, through state-administered or funded programs.

NAHRO Recommendations: Local Government

NAHRO has detailed recommendations for local governments contained in the attached appendix. The following recommendations are highlighted for the immediate future. Local governments are encouraged to seriously consider:

1. Institution of a community-wide homeless task force to assess homeless need and to propose a permanent entity to coordinate all community resources under an integrated plan. This should include centralized information management. (See the issue paper for NAHRO: Assessing the Problem of Homelessness Through Community-Wide Planning and Coordination Systems, by Jonathan Zimmer.

2. Development and enforcement by appropriate city departments, in conjunction with service providers, of appropriate health and safety standards for all homeless shelters and housing, insuring alternatives for housing any persons displaced.

3. The governing body of the locality should consider appropriate ordinances designed to: (a) maintain low-income rental units in downtown neighborhoods; (b) prevent the demolition or conversion of SRO units unless there is a replacement; and (c) provide for quality locations for homeless shelters and group homes to serve homeless persons.

4. Appropriate city departments and agencies should inventory suitable city-owned land, structures, tax-delinquent properties, bank-held properties, and other resources that could be utilized to serve special needs such as homeless, mentally ill, and battered women.

5. Appropriate city departments and agencies should consider issuance of General Obligation Bonds (or other capital funds) to develop or rehabilitate structures for homeless persons, with

incentives for cooperative financing by private and nonprofit groups.

A Larger Picture for the Future

The emergence of homelessness as a critical national problem, the complexity of the causes and the solutions, require a more comprehensive effort than is currently underway. Growing evidence of a seriously-disadvantaged "underclass" in major American cities demands attention. From a housing and community development perspective, this involves attention to the continuing existence of large blighted areas in major urban centers, and the growing inadequacies of the available housing supply for lower income persons. These are prime areas for future action.

NAHRO appreciates the opportunity to present its views on the critical issue of homelessness.

APPENDIX

NAHRO National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials
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NAHRO REPORT ON THE HOMELESS

December, 1986

- NAHRO Resolution and Policy Recommendations Adopted by the NAHRO Board of Governors, September 27, 1986
- Table of Contents, NAHRO Resource Book on Assistance for Homeless Persons
- Table of Contents of Selected Experience of Local Housing and Community Development Agencies in Assisting Homeless Persons

Melvin J. Adams, President. **Helen L. Sause**, Senior Vice President. **Howard T. Byrd**, Vice President—Commissioners. **Joseph E. Gray, Jr.**, Vice President—Community Revitalization and Development. **John Simon**, Vice President—Housing. **Joan Smith**, Vice

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RESOLUTION ON HOMELESSNESS IN AMERICA

WHEREAS, communities throughout the country have growing numbers of homeless persons; and

WHEREAS, the "homeless" are young and old, single persons and families, able-bodied and handicapped whose condition requires the broad attention and action of private and public organizations alike; and

WHEREAS, failure to act at all levels of government and by private organizations exacerbates the plight of a growing number of Americans and reflects a disregard for the national goal of a "decent home and a suitable living environment for every American;"

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT

RESOLVED, that the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials urges each level of government, private, profit and nonprofit organizations and institutions to pursue the actions set forth in the recommentations contained in the accompanying Statements, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials both on its own account and through encouraging its members seeks to achieve the recommendations contained in the accompanying Statement.

ADOPTED THIS 27th DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 1986.

Melvin J. Adams, President, **Helen L. Sause**, Senior Vice President, **Howard T. Byrd**, Vice President—Commissioners, **Joseph E. Gray, Jr.**, Vice President—Community Revitalization and Development, **John Simon**, Vice President—Housing, **Joan Smith**, Vice

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NAHRO POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS ON ASSISTANCE FOR HOMELESS PERSONS

Adopted by the

NAHRO Board of Governors

September 27, 1986

PREAMBLE

NAHRO BELIEVES that the needs of homeless persons in local communities across the United States are urgent and pervasive. While precise documentation of the numbers of homeless persons is difficult, it is clear that this number is significant and growing, in both urban and rural areas. It is equally clear that homelessness is not limited to one type of household -- it includes an increasing number of children of broken or one-parent households, as well as the jobless, single older women and men, and the mentally ill. From a housing perspective, being without a home is the end product of a rental housing supply that is increasingly inadequate in terms of volume, condition, unit sizes, and rent levels.

NAHRO BELIEVES that the responsibility of assisting homeless persons requires the cooperative efforts of nonprofit, public, and private organizations. Traditionally, nonprofit social service organizations have taken major responsibility and they continue to be the key agents in providing direct assistance. But the increased volume of homeless persons and the impact of homelessness on the well-being of cities -- on physical, social, and economic structure -- require new involvement by government and by the private sector.

NAHRO BELIEVES that localities should seek a broad range of involvement of the private sector, especially those private entities concerned with the effect of homelessness on the economic, physical, and social well-being of the community. Many private corporations are located in the inner core areas of cities where homelessness has its heaviest impact. They include private foundations, commercial businesses, the banking community, the hotel and insurance industries. They can provide critical support and technical expertise in dealing with such needs as financing housing, employing industry-displaced workers, mobilizing support services, and providing access to vacant structures or sites.

Melvin J. Adams, President, **Helen L. Sause**, Senior Vice President, **Howard T. Byrd**, Vice President—Commissioners, **Joseph E. Gray, Jr.**, Vice President—Community Revitalization and Development, **John Simon**, Vice President—Housing, **Joan Smith**, Vice

NAHRO FURTHER BELIEVES that the public responsibility of assisting homeless persons does not rest with any one level of government; action and resources are required at federal, state, and local levels. It should be recognized that homelessness is a national problem reflecting the dynamic changes taking place in American industry and employment, as well as demographic shifts. The federal government has a particular responsibility to take a leadership role in developing an ongoing, beyond an emergency, effort to provide short-term, transitional, and permanent housing with appropriate support services for homeless persons. The causes of homelessness are deep-rooted and will not be solved by placing homeless persons in temporary shelters. The goal should be to re-integrate them to the maximum degree possible into the total community structure and into the total society.

FINALLY, NAHRO BELIEVES that local community development agencies and local housing authorities have important skills and resources that should increasingly be put to use in assisting homeless persons, as part of a total effort that includes a range of support services as well as physical shelter. A new relationship between housing providers and service providers is evolving centered on the needs of the homeless, and this trend should be encouraged and expanded. To assist this development, NAHRO has prepared A Resource Book for Local Housing and Community Development Agencies, containing documented examples of what some of these agencies are now doing to assist homeless persons; this can be used by additional agencies in developing homeless efforts.

IN NINETEEN FORTY-NINE, the Congress proclaimed as a national goal the provision of a decent home and a suitable living environment for every American family. IN NINETEEN EIGHTY-SIX, NAHRO supports national legislation to supplement this goal, under a concept of adequate shelter for every American, and with a resource allocation to implement this objective for homeless persons.

NAHRO POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

I. General: There is need for an integrated long-term policy and program for homeless persons. NAHRO recommends that the National Emergency Food and Shelter Board assess the current efforts to assist the homeless, consult with a broad spectrum of national, state, and local interests, and make recommendations as to appropriate responsibilities for public, private, and nonprofit entities at national, state, and local levels.

II. National Legislation:

A. NAHRO supports national legislation under a concept of adequate shelter for every American, including emergency, transitional, and permanent housing opportunities, and with additional funding to implement this goal for homeless persons.

B. NAHRO supports the provisions on homeless assistance pending in the 1986 Housing Authorization legislation. This legislation provides for (a) continuation of the Emergency Food and Shelter Program currently administered by the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA), (b) a new Emergency Shelter Grant Program to rehabilitate and operate existing housing for shelters, and (c) demonstrations to test new approaches to homeless assistance.

III. Administrative/Regulatory Actions:

-Department of HUD -- NAHRO expresses concern about the minimal level of HUD implementation in follow-up of Secretary Pierce's letter of January, 1985. HUD should take accelerated actions to implement the goals of this letter, in particular in the following areas:

A. Access by local communities (PHAs) to additional Section 8 Moderate Rehabilitation funds to assist rehabilitation of structures for homeless persons.

B. Uniform and quick response to PHA requests to lease units to homeless persons; in particular (a) PHA requests to adjust admission requirements to assist homeless persons on an emergency basis in public housing, and (b) use of Section 8 Certificates and Vouchers in Single Room Occupancy (SRO) units.

C. Provision to assign "blocks" (in lieu of individual certificates) of Section 8 Existing Certificates or Vouchers for use in Newly-Rehabilitated Shelters and Interim Housing Structures.

D. Expediting provisions whereby PHAs can utilize public housing development funds and operating subsidies to acquire/rehabilitate existing structures for leasing to nonprofit groups for housing homeless persons. Currently, the New York City Housing Authority is attempting to carry out such a program.

E. Acceleration of use of HUD-owned properties; only 25 properties had been used for homeless needs as of the end of 1985.

F. Analyze and assess future policies relating to the HUD demonstration on "Housing and the Chronically Mentally Ill." Under this demonstration, HUD supplies 1,000 Section 8 Certificates worth $75 million in rent subsidies over the life of the project. In particular, future policy involving HUD rent subsidization of institutions for mentally ill should be evaluated in terms of responsibilities of public welfare agencies, and particularly state governments, to provide income support for such persons.

-Farmers Home Administration (FmHA):

A. Acceleration of procedures to make FmHA foreclosed properties available to homeless.

B. Identification of ways to improve delivery of support services assistance to homeless so they can be housed under FmHA program.

-Department of HHS:

A. Recommend the use by states of federal emergency shelter allowance funds.

B. Recommend that states assure that AFDC homeless families are housed in decent, safe and sanitary units.

C. Amend the federal statute to prohibit termination of federal disability benefits unless it is shown that the beneficiary is able to work and work is available (American Public Welfare Association recommendation).

D. Amend federal policy on AFDC to remove the time limit on the disregard of earnings as a work incentive when calculating eligibility and benefits, to exempt all children's earnings from the determination of eligibility

and benefits, and to raise the limit on resources a family may own and still qualify to $2,250 (the current limit is $1,000) (American Public Welfare Association recommendation).

E. Encourage "state plans" to target use of HHS support services programs to be used in conjunction with homeless shelters and housing developments for homeless, particularly those that are initiating new approaches to assisting homeless persons escape dependency.

-National Food and Shelter Board:

Based on FEMA experience, formulate model guidelines for local boards to administer services.

STATE POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

I. General: Federal efforts should be integrated with state and local actions. State governments are encouraged to consider seriously the following recommendations.

II. State Legislation (see report of NAHRO Working Group on the Homeless on "State Legislation and Activity"):

A. Establish special grant or loan programs to assist renovation and new construction of housing for homeless persons (following models in active states).

B. Revise any legislative provisions that require deinstitutionalization of persons from state institutions until future planning for their housing and support services is assured. Develop "Transitional Assistance" programs.

C. Establish capital grant (or loan) funds to assist renovation or construction of "Group Residences," including special support facilities.

D. Adopt or amend the General Assistance (welfare) programs to insure ongoing assistance for persons unable to work or unable to locate work. (Some states now provide such assistance for only up to three months.)

E. Adjust levels of AFDC and SSI benefits (particularly shelter allowance benefits) to enable households to meet basic needs. (See State of Maine Task Force Report, February, 1986.)

F. Require that homeless families receiving AFDC assistance be housed in decent, safe and sanitary units.

III. Administrative/Regulatory Recommendations:

A. Establish a cabinet level, interdepartmental coordinating committee and develop interdepartmental agreements designed to integrate housing with support services for homeless, through state-administered or funded programs.

B. Restructure General Assistance (welfare) programs to leverage funds used for "Emergency Housing" into longer term (at least annual) leases with shelter operators and landlords (rather than short-term hotels and motels).

C. Utilize available federal funds under the HHS Emergency Shelter program within the state (see Rosenbaum paper for the NAHRO Working Group on the Homeless).

D. Leverage both General Assistance (welfare) funds and HHS Emergency Shelter funds to stimulate rehabilitation of housing (see Rosenbaum paper for the NAHRO Working Group on the Homeless).

E. States should initiate training programs for shelter operators.

LOCAL RECOMMENDATIONS

I. General: Federal efforts should be integrated with state and local actions. Local governments are encouraged to consider seriously the following recommendations.

II. Local Coordination and General Local:

A. The chief executive officer of the locality should take responsibility for initiating a community-wide homeless task force to assess homeless need and to propose a permanent entity to coordinate all community resources under an integrated plan. This should include centralized information management. (See Zimmer paper for the NAHRO Working Group on the Homeless.)

B. Appropriate city departments should develop and enforce, in conjunction with service providers, appropriate health and safety standards for all homeless shelters and housing, insuring alternatives for housing any persons displaced.

C. The governing body of the locality should consider appropriate ordinances designed to: (a) maintain low-income rental units in downtown neighborhoods; (b) prevent the demolition or conversion of SRO units unless there is a replacement; and (c) provide for quality locations for homeless shelters and group homes to serve homeless persons.

D. Appropriate city departments and agencies should inventory suitable city-owned land, structures, tax-delinquent properties, bank-held properties, and other resources that could be utilized to serve special needs such as homeless, mentally ill, and battered women.

E. Appropriate city departments and agencies should consider issuance of General Obligation Bonds (or other capital funds) to develop or rehabilitate structures for homeless persons, with incentives for cooperative financing by private and nonprofit groups.

F. Local social welfare agencies should adjust their assistance policies to achieve maximum leverage of shelter allowances (AFDC, SSI, General Assistance) or special cash vouchers to insure that housing occupied by homeless persons is safe and sanitary, and provide incentives for landlords to rehabilitate properties using these payments as leverage. (See Rosenbaum paper for the NAHRO Working Group on the Homeless.)

G. The hotel industry should be encouraged to cooperate with social welfare and housing agencies in providing facilities for short-term emergency housing.

H. Local governments should consider use of special zoning or property tax incentives to encourage development of a wide range of housing and support service initiatives for homeless persons.

-Local Community Development Agencies (CDAs) (see "Selected Experience of Local Housing and Community Development Agencies," prepared by the NAHRO Working Group on the Homeless):

A. Local CDAs should actively participate in the local task forces charged with assessing needs and developing an integrated community-wide plan to serve the homeless.

B. Local CDAs should review their current housing and neighborhood improvement programs to assess both the impact on homelessness and how homeless needs might best be accommodated within these programs.

C. Local CDAs should assess their current resources (including land, structures, CDBG, Tax Increment, and UDAG funds, etc.) to determine how any of these resources might be utilized to assist homeless programs, including new construction or renovation of structures for homeless persons.

D. Local CDAs should make available, to the degree possible, their staff expertise in the areas of financing, development, and rehabilitation to assist community homeless projects.

-Local Public Housing Agencies (PHAs):

A. Local PHAs should actively participate in the local task forces charged with assessing needs and developing an integrated community-wide plan to serve these needs.

B. Local PHAs should assess the current status of their public housing inventory to determine if there are vacant units, community spaces, or other facilities that could appropriately be leased to nonprofit agencies for serving homeless persons.

C. Local PHAs should assess the potential availability of Section 8 Certificates or Section 8 Moderate Rehabilitation to determine if those resources might be utilized to assist emergency housing needs or assist the development of interim or permanent housing for homeless persons. This could require requesting additional allocations from the Department of HUD.

D. Local PHAs should assess the availability of public housing development funds, or local development funds that might be made available to them, to acquire existing properties or undertake new construction of housing for homeless persons. Such housing might be leased for management to qualified nonprofit groups.

E. Local PHAs should make available, to the degree possible, their staff expertise in the areas of financing, development, rehabilitation, and management to assist community homeless projects.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NAHRO

A. In response to the charge given to this Working Group by the NAHRO President, the NAHRO Board of Governors should adopt the policy recommendations of the NAHRO Working Group on the Homeless. This action should be followed by a press release.

B. NAHRO should publish the material in the report of the NAHRO Working Group on the Homeless: Assistance for Homeless Persons: A NAHRO

Resource Book for Housing and Community Development Agencies. These should be considered in two parts -- publication of the Introduction, Policy Recommendations, and Executive Summaries in the Journal of Housing, and publication of the full Resource Book for sale on request. Efforts should be made to seek broad coalition participation in publication and distribution.

C. NAHRO should disseminate the Summary Report (Introduction, Policy Recommendations, Executive Summaries) to appropriate legislative and administrative officials at federal, state, and local levels, and to appropriate national public interest organizations.

D. NAHRO should program the material and appropriate resource persons to participate in its National, Regional, and Chapter conferences, and make available resource persons to other organizations.

E. NAHRO should develop mechanisms to keep abreast of activities in assistance to the homeless, through: (1) exploring whether the Housing and Development Law Institute (HDLI) can use state legislation material in the report as a base, and develop a mechanism to track legislation; (2) incorporating new activity into its computer file; (3) reporting in the Monitor and Journal; and (4) maintaining contact with other organizations undertaking activity to assist the homeless.

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ASSISTANCE FOR HOMELESS PERSONS: A NAHRO RESOURCE BOOK FOR HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES

Prepared by the

NAHRO Working Group on the Homeless

December, 1986

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I. NAHRO Policy Recommendations for Assisting the Homeless: Federal, State, Local, NAHRO

(Approved by the NAHRO Board of Governors, September 29, 1986)

II. Federal Legislation and Activity

-A Profile of Federal Activity: 1986
-A Summary of Homeless Assistance in 1986 Authorizing Legislation
-A Summary of the Proposed "Homeless Persons Survival Act" (S. 2608, H.R. 5140)

III. State Legislation and Activity

-A Summary of State Legislation and Activity Based on a Survey of the 50 States
-Case Studies of State Activity: (1) Rental or Operating Subsidies; (2) Capital Funding for Construction or Rehabilitation of Shelter Facilities; (3) Preventive Assistance; and (4) Support Services

Prepared by Robert D. Katz, Director, Housing Research and Development, University of Illinois, Urbana; Nancy Travers, Assistant Commissioner, New York State Department of Social Services, New York City; and Michael Asbury, New York State Department of Social Services, Albany, New York.

IV. Linking Housing and Human Services Systems: New Methods in the Provision of Housing for Homeless Persons - 21 pp.

A paper by Elisabeth B. Rosenbaum, President, Urban Initiatives, Stamford, Connecticut, which describes the process and benefits

RESOURCE BOOK
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of linking HUD and HHS assistance. Presents a case example of how "The Emergency Housing Apartment Program" of HHS can be used as an income stream to stimulate the rehabilitation of housing for homeless persons.

V. Addressing the Problem of Homelessness Through Comprehensive Community-Wide Planning and Coordination Systems - 53 pp.

A paper by Jonathan E. Zimmer, Executive Director, Action-Housing, Inc., Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, which sets forth the eight components of a local planning and coordination system, and describes methods to secure support for the plan, and how to harness human resources and leverage dollars, implement the plan, and evaluate its results. Describes in detail the local plans in Pittsburgh, Trenton (New Jersey), Portland (Oregon), and Phoenix (Arizona).

VI. Selected Experience of Local Housing and Community Development Agencies in Assisting Homeless Persons - 280 pp.

A compilation, with the assistance of the Working Group, by Mary K. Nenno, NAHRO Associate Director, Washington, DC, which documents 25 case studies of local experience: (1) Multiple Activities; (2) New Construction or Substantial Rehabilitation of Structures; (3) Use of Section 8 Moderate Rehabilitation; (4) Financing, Management, and Technical Assistance; (5) Leasing of Housing Units; and (6) Local Ordinances to Facilitate Homeless Assistance. Provides names of contact persons for further information.

VII. Bibliography on the Homeless.

Key sources utilized in the preparation of the NAHRO Resource Book.

SELECTED EXPERIENCE OF LOCAL HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES IN ASSISTING HOMELESS PERSONS

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

II. MULTIPLE ACTIVITIES

--Community Redevelopment Agency of Los Angeles: Implementing a comprehensive effort to improve skid-row in a 1,500 acre central business district redevelopment area by providing housing, social services, job development, and open spaces. Includes creation of two non-profit agencies, assistance to non-profit service providers and property owners who provide shelter, use of tax increments from redevelopment to create a homeless shelter trust fund to annually fund the operation of up to 420 beds in homeless shelters. Also, city-wide assistance for the homeless. Staff member of CRA is Chairman of Mayor's Homeless Committee.

--Seattle Housing Authority: Leasing space in a public housing development for the offices of the Seattle Emergency Housing Services Operation; leasing of 45 public housing units for homeless persons; rehabilitation of building owned by the PHA -- includes 205 units of permanent single room occupancy (SRO) managed by the public housing authority, and 230 emergency shelter beds operated by the Downtown Emergency Service Center.

--Housing Authority of the Birmingham (Alabama) District: PHA has lead responsibility in Birmingham to address city's homeless population and coordinate emergency housing efforts; leasing of units in HUD-owned foreclosed properties for homeless persons; rehabilitation of fire house as an emergency overnight shelter; developing health care program for the homeless; renovation of structures for intermediate shelters for families and day shelter for women and children (the drop-in day shelter for women and children is the lower level of a PHA-owned high rise facility).

--Housing and Redevelopment Agency of Sacramento: Leadership in developing a city-wide program involving renovation and conversion of shelter facilities, use of Agency-owned single family homes, provision of funds to locate and help operate scattered site facilities, use of Section 8 Certificates and Vouchers, development of a family shelter facility, operation of a transitional housing program, and development of a jobs program. All of these initiatives involve use of county and city CDBG funds, county and city general funds, downtown tax increment monies, state Emergency Shelter funds, and Federal FEMA funds.

--Housing Authority of Portland (Oregon): Leasing public housing apartments as transitional housing for homeless to neighborhood based agencies; providing permanent housing if "care management services" are provided; rehabilitating a community center in a public housing development for housing for homeless persons; providing Section 8 Moderate Rehabilitation to facilitate rehabilitation of homeless shelter (see Portland Development Commission, Part III).

--San Diego Housing Commission: Conducted a study of downtown hotels and single room occupancy and developed a comprehensive set of program options now being implemented. Also worked cooperatively with the City Planning Department to prepare an ordinance covering preservation of SRO hotel units (See part VII).

III. NEW CONSTRUCTION OR SUBSTANTIAL REHABILITATION

--New York City Housing Authority: Substantial rehabilitation of 149 interim housing units in seven multi-family structures using federal public housing development funding; and modernization of a 107-unit public housing development for use as interim family housing for homeless persons. PHA leases these units for management to a non-profit organization (lease document attached).

--Housing Authorities of City and County of Fresno, California: Acquisition and rehabilitation of a 32-unit structure for emergency shelter for homeless families; managed by PHA under a contract with the local Department of Social Services, which provides food, clothing, and supportive services.

--Newport News Redevelopment and Housing Authority: Acquisition and rehabilitation of a five-family dwelling with funds provided by the city from Jobs Bill and CDBG funds. Authority leases the structure to the Salvation Army for management and operation.

--Portland (Oregon) Development Commission: Rehabilitating four existing multi-family structures under a Single Room Occupancy Demonstration, utilizing CDBG funds, Section 8 Moderate Rehabilitation, and private financing.

--Seattle Department of Community Development: Rehabilitation of an apartment structure (60 units) for tiered housing (transitional living, congregate care, and intensive care) for homeless, mentally-ill adults. Financing is provided through Washington State referendum funds, CDBG funds, and private contributions. It is operated by Community Psychiatric Clinic.

IV. SECTION 8 MODERATE REHABILITATION

(In addition to Portland Development Commission, Part III.)

--Cuyahoga (Cleveland) Metropolitan Housing Authority: Moderate rehabilitation and 15-year rental assistance for 45 units in a [illegible] for battered

and homeless women. Ownership and operation is by Transitional Housing, Inc., a non-profit organization affiliated with the Sisters of St. Joseph.

V. FINANCING, MANAGEMENT, AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

--CDBG Program, City of Iowa City: Start-up funding from Jobs Bill and CDBG funds for the acquisition and rehabilitation of a structure for emergency and transitional housing by a non-profit organization. Local CDBG also provided technical assistance in financing and rehabilitation.

--Community Development Division, City of Portland and Portland (Oregon) Housing Authority: These agencies are part of a planning committee of public and non-profit groups in Multnomah County, Oregon, to allocate short-term (two-week) locally-funded vouchers for use in publicly and privately owned apartments, hotels, and motels. Also, CDBG funds are being used to enable the Salvation Army to acquire and rehabilitate a single-family (eight-room) structure for use as emergency shelter for homeless families.

--King County (Washington) Department of Planning and Community Development: Serves as the lead agency in the development of studies to assess the conditions and need for emergency shelter in King County.

--Community Planning and Development Department of Boise City, Idaho: CDBG funds are used to make necessary repairs (not ordinary maintenance) to existing housing units being used for permanent housing for homeless families. The CPD staff inspects the units to see that they are maintained. It also serves as monitor, evaluator, and technical assistant.

--Provo (Utah) Housing Authority: Manages transient shelter for homeless persons.

VI. LEASING OF HOUSING UNITS

--Memphis (Tennessee) Housing Authority: PHA leases HUD-foreclosed single-family structures for occupancy by homeless families. Also, carries out an "Emergency Temporary Housing Program" in other existing housing units. (Attached: Instructions for Use of HUD-Owned Properties.)

--Lorain (Ohio) Metropolitan Housing Authority: PHA leases four public housing units (three six-bedroom units and one one-bedroom unit) to local non-profit organizations for homeless families.

--Bremerton (Washington) Housing Authority: PHA leases six public housing units to Kitsap Emergency Housing.

--Pierce County (Washington) Housing Authority: Utilizes 50 Section 8 Existing housing and a case-management approach to assist highly motivated homeless families regain financial, emotional, and social stability.

--Massachusetts NAHRO, The Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless, and the Massacchusetts State Executive Office of Communities and Development -- A Model Emergency Case Plan, to cover admission of homeless persons to state-assisted public housing has been negotiated between the above parties. (Plan and tenant selection regulations are attached.)

VII. LOCAL ORDINANCES TO FACILITATE HOMELESS ASSISTANCE

--City of Los Angeles: A proposed city ordinance to govern location of shelters for the homeless within the city is pending approval in January, 1986. (Draft ordinance attached.)

--City of Seattle: The Department of Community Development took the initiative to draft a "Downtown Housing Maintenance Ordinance" which was adopted by the city in August, 1985. The ordinance requires owners renting housing in downtown area to keep rental units on the market and to keep them habitable. City provides rehab loan funds up to $2,000 per unit. The Department of Community Development and the Department of Construction and Land Use share administrative and enforcement responsibility for the ordinances. (Draft of ordinance attached.)

--City of San Diego: The City Planning Department and the San Diego Housing Commission cooperated in development of an ordinance "to prevent the demolition and/or conversion of single room occupancy (SRO) residential hotel units." (Ordinance draft attached.)

State of Connecticut

AN ACTION PLAN TO ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF THE HOMELESS

Report of the Governor's Task Force on the Homeless

January 1986

THE GOVERNOR'S TASK FORCE
ON THE HOMELESS

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APPENDIX

A. Implementation Status of Recommendations of the Initial Report of the Governor's Task Force on the Homeless

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

OFFICE OF POLICY AND MANAGEMENT

January 1986

Honorable William A. O'Neill
Governor, State of Connecticut
Executive Chambers, State Capitol
Hartford, Connecticut

Dear Governor O'Neill:

As Chairman of your Task Force on the Homeless, I am pleased to transmit the attached Action Plan To Address The Needs Of The Homeless.

This Plan represents the concerted efforts of Task Force members, state agency staff, and many others. The Plan offers a comprehensive and coordinated approach that will promote the self-sufficiency of the most vulnerable members of our society. The Plan builds upon the progress made in the implementation of the initial Task Force recommendations and makes additional recommendations that will increase our capacity to address the needs of the homeless.

Everyone on the Task Force - Representatives of State Agencies, the Coalition on the Homeless, Connecticut's municipalities, and members of the public are committed to continue the positive relationships that have been strengthened as a result of this process. All of these efforts, including your recently announced housing initiative, demonstrate the significant level of Connecticut's commitment to meet the needs of the homeless. The Task Force will continue to support the efforts on behalf of the homeless. A meeting will be convened to followup on the recommendations and you will be updated at that time on the implementation status.

I am pleased to be a part of this very important endeavor, and I remain committed to its implementation.

Sincerely,

Howard Rifkin
Deputy Secretary, OPM
Chairman

Phone:
80 Washington Street • Hartford, Connecticut 06106
An Equal Opportunity Employer

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many individuals provided significant contributions and cooperation in the development of this Action Plan and I wish to acknowledge their important and greatly appreciated support.

I wish to acknowledge the staff of the Departments of Human Resources and Housing who chaired the various sub-committees of the Task Force. The quality and quantity of their efforts were a credit to the dedication and professionalism of persons in state service. Their concerns for and committment to the most vulnerable sector of our population were well manifested.

A special appreciation is extended to the representatives of the various groups who provide direct services to the homeless. Their support, guidance and encouragement was invaluable.

Howard Rifkin
Deputy Secretary
Office of Policy and Management
Chairman of the Governor's Task Force
on the Homeless

I. INTRODUCTION

The members of the Governor's Task Force on the Homeless recognize that homelessness is in large measure symptomatic of larger social problems. As a consequence, the Task Force is committed to a wholistic approach that addresses the problems and needs of the homeless within the context of the social service delivery system. The goal of the Task Force is to provide those support services that will assist the homeless to assume or resume productive roles within the greater community.

The strength of the current services to the homeless lies in the dedicated efforts of community groups who reach out to help those who are less fortunate. The State is working with municipalities and the Coalition on the Homeless to strengthen the existing cooperation and coordination with the shelter network. It is the state's policy to take the necessary steps to ensure that a minimum level of care is provided to people using emergency shelters.

The deliberations of the Task Force members and the concerted efforts of state agency staff have resulted in a plethora of background information and data that is encapsulated in the ensuing Action Plan. Recommendations are presented in three general categories: Shelters, Housing, and Support Services. However, there are several emerging themes throughout:

- Prevention of homelessness through appropriate intervention
- Protection of the individual and family, and provision of basic needs
- Promotion of self-sufficiency for the individual and family
- Enhancement of the current system of service provision through strengthened partnerships between the state, service providers, and municipalities, and through improved management information systems

- Development of affordable and decent housing to meet the permanent and transitional needs of the general and specialized populations which comprise the homeless in Connecticut

The question of the adequacy of shelter beds throughout Connecticut continues to be an issue. The Department of Human Resources, as the lead state agency for shelters, has been meeting and will continue to meet and work with shelter providers, municipal officials, and community leaders in order to ensure that an adequate number of beds in safe and clean facilities are available to the homeless.

The Task Force itself will continue to address this question. At the same time we will pursue longer term solutions to the problem of homelessness.

II. METHODOLOGY

The ensuing Action Plan is the result of a two-phase process. In October 1983, Governor O'Neill appointed a Task Force and charged the members to provide leadership to ensure that the needs of the homeless were met. During the first phase, the Task Force met regularly, surveyed communities, held public hearings and advocated on behalf of the homeless. A report was produced in February of 1985 that provided insight and gave direction for further action.

During the summer of 1985, Governor O'Neill requested that Howard Rifkin, Deputy Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management, assume the chairman role and continue the work of the Task Force. During the second phase of the Governor's Task Force, a concerted effort was made to further our efforts on behalf of the homeless. The status of the initial recommendations was updated, a literature search was conducted to identify potential initiatives, and a structured agenda was provided to identify the short term responses and to develop a long term direction for addressing the needs of the homeless.

The components identified in the first Task Force report provided the framework of this Action Plan. A preliminary meeting of state agencies was convened as a first step to the work of the Task Force, to establish a forum for interagency concerns and coordination with respect to the homeless and to develop a draft work plan. The Task Force was convened on October 16 to:

- Review progress to date on initial recommendations of the Task Force
- Review and approve components of the suggested Work Plan
- Assign tasks to Work Groups and identify lead agencies.

The Department of Human Resources was designated the lead agency for the shelter and the support services components; the Department of Housing was designated the lead agency for the housing component. Both lead agencies met extensively with appropriate persons from state agencies, the Connecticut Coalition on the Homeless, etc., to pursue the tasks within their respective component(s). As a result of this intensive effort, the Action Plan was developed for submittal to the Governor for consideration.

III. ACTION PLAN

SHELTERS

It is the State's policy to take whatever steps are needed to ensure that a miminum level of service is provided to people using emergency shelters for the homeless. This level of service can only be attained through the establishment of minimum standards of operation for existing and prospective shelters. While the State has the fundamental responsibility for developing such standards, this can only be accomplished through full cooperation and coordination with the existing shelter network. The development of minimum standards of operation for emergency shelters is a priority objective of the Governor's Task Force. These standards will be designed to assist, encourage and enhance both the willingness and the capacity of our communities to provide needed services to the homeless.

A. Physical Standards

Minimum physical standards for emergency shelters are necessary for public health and safety reasons. Yet, the continued operation of shelters is an equally legitimate public concern. Hence, physical standards for shelters must be carefully defined and sensibly applied. Current state regulations do not provide a uniform physical standard for shelters. Instead, they require compliance with local codes and generally require a municipal certificate of occupancy. Yet municipal codes and regulations often vary considerably from town to town. In an effort to ensure uniform standards for specialized shelters, some state agencies have successfully coordinated joint initial inspections by state and local officials.

Recommendations

- All existing and new shelters should meet minimum municipal code requirements.
- Suspected violations should be investigated by appropriate health and safety officials. Where violations are found, the steps needed to bring the shelter into compliance should be clearly spelled out.

- Existing shelters should be qualified as in compliance until January 1, 1988. In addition, bond funds should be authorized to the Department of Human Resources (DHR) to help finance repairs required to achieve compliance. A technical assistance team, comprised of staff from DHR, Housing (DOH), and the Coalition of the Homeless (Coalition), and representativies from the municipalities,should be convened immediately to ensure compliance achievement.
- DHR will coordinate a study with DOH, the Coalition, the Intergovernmental Relations Division of the Office of Policy and Management (OPM-IGR), and municipalities to determine if a single standard zoning category (i.e. dormitory) could be applied to all shelters for the homeless. The study will be completed by July 1, 1986.

B. Program Standards

Shelters vary in philosophy, sources of funding, clientele served, support services offered, staffing patterns and other operational details. They are potentially subject to a variety of budgetary, payment and reporting requirements. There is no standard client-tracking or reporting system. Minimum and preferred practices of operation are potentially available, but a true measure of their effectiveness is contingent upon development of a flexible and generally applicable evaluation mechanism. While some state agencies fund shelters through per diem rates of reimbursement, DHR has defined a unit of shelter service and subsidizes a portion of the concomitant per unit cost. Finally, there is a serious gap in the shelter system for 16-18 year old children who refuse assistance from the Department of Children and Youth Services (DCYS) but may be ineligible for service at adult shelters, as well as for some 18 years old who desire (and would be appropriate for) DCYS service, but are no long eligible.

Recommendations

- The following minimum Program Standards are recommended for all shelters:
  a) Minimum hours of operation, including overnight, should be no less than 10 hours a day.
  b) Basic hygiene practices, including showers, should be required.
  c) Supervision in shelters should consist of at least one paid staff person on duty at all times. An exception would be families and individuals in hotels/motels.
  d) A written security policy which includes information on how to contact police, hospital and ambulance services should be visibly posted.
  e) Paid staff should be required to have an annual physical examination, including a T.B. test. Volunteers should be encouraged to do likewise.
  f) A written admission policy should be adopted.
  g) A formal written intake procedure, with provisions for confidentiality, should be established.
  h) All 24-hour shelters should provide food.
- The following additional Preferred Practices should be encouraged, but not required, wherever possible:
  a) Food should be provided in all shelters.
  b) There should be at least one staff person for each 25 guests.
  c) Case management services should be provided.
  d) Health screening by a nurse practioner or a physician should be provided.
  e) Transportation between shelters and services should be provided.
  f) Space for temporary storage of personal household goods should be provided.
- State shelter appropriations and federal block grant funds used for grants-in-aid to shelters should be transferred to a single state agency (or fewer agencies) to simplify and reduce the cost of financial administration, contracting, budgeting, reporting and auditing.

- o DHR should, in conjunction with other appropriate state agencies and the Coalition, develop a flexible and generally applicable evaluation and monitoring mechanism for shelters based upon the minimum program standards recommended.
- o DHR, in conjunction with DCYS, the Attorney General and the Coalition, should study the legal ramifications of extending adult shelter services to 16-18 year old children, and make recommendations for the 1987 legislative session.
- o DHR should prepare an RFP to permit shelters to include preferred practices in their grants and increase its contribution to the per unit cost of services provided, accordingly.

C. Coordination of Services

To date, coordination of efforts to provide services to the homeless has proceeded on a relatively informal basis. Although this approach has worked well, particularly on a regional level, there is a growing recognition that the relationship between the shelter network and state agencies should be formalized to the extent of supporting the leadership responsibilities of both the Coalition and DHR for providing services to Connecticut's homeless population.

Recommendations

- o The State, through DHR, should provide a grant-in-aid to the Coalition to establish an Office of Shelters Coordinator to maintain, strengthen and further develop the shelter network through coordination and communication among shelters, state agencies, the General Assembly and others; to coordinate research and data collection; and to expedite solutions to problems confronting shelters, particularly with regard to placements.
- o DHR should coordinate an interagency effort to work with the Coalition to develop common reporting requirements for all shelters by January 1987; to develop recommendations for streamlining data collection by January 1987; and to develop a comprehensive set of cost models for shelter services by March 1987.

- Additional funds should be appropriated to the State Department on Aging to expand its Ombudsman program to address the needs of the homeless elderly. It is estimated that approximately 7% of the homeless population consists of elderly persons.

D. Profile of Shelter Network

Since shelters for the homeless are financed by a variety of sources, no single agency is capable of providing a comprehensive profile of the homeless, the services currently available to them and the costs associated with them. Such a profile is capable of being assembled, but it can be done only through a highly coordinated effort.

Recommendation

- The development of a comprehensive profile of Connecticut's homeless population and its shelter network should be a priority task of state agencies and the shelter network, under the leadership of DHR and the Coalition.

E. Informational Materials

The need for information concerning shelters is apparent on two levels. First, existing and prospective shelter operators need a ready source of information to tell them such basic things as what sources of funding are available, where technical assistance can be located, whom to call for help and, perhaps most important, the telephone numbers to call in such cases. Second, there is a need to update DHR's Statewide Directory of Shelters and Emergency Feeding Facilities for distribution to shelters, state agencies, municipal officials and many others.

Recommendation

- DHR should produce and distribute an informational pamphlet and an updated Directory by April 1, 1986. Both documents should be revised as needed.

F. Federal Reimbursement

Federal reimbursement for shelter services for battered spouses and their children appears to be possible through AFDC Special Needs

payments. Such reimbursement, however, would necessitate a change to the State Plan, amendment of current state regulations and a declaratory ruling that family violence leading to eviction falls within the scope of "catastrophic events." Assuming that reimbursement can be obtained, DIH would have to administer payments carefully to ensure that money is spent only to meet shelter needs of victims and does not end up in the hands of alleged batterers.

Recommendation

- o DIH should assess and coordinate whatever legal and administrative steps are needed to secure AFDC Special Needs payments for costs associated with providing shelter services to victims of domestic violence. Information should be shared with the Coalition and appropriate agencies when available.

G. Housing Related Measures to Prevent Homelessness

Consideration has been given to establishing a program to provide assistance in paying delinquent rent and utility charges in order to forestall eviction and thus prevent homelessness. However, difficulties in establishing manageable administrative criteria appear to militate against creation of such a program at this time. Instead, clearly defined direct assistance programs, such as energy assistance grants, should be continued and supported. Consideration should also be given to coordination of a public education effort designed to apprise potential homeless persons of the full panoply of rights available to tenants.

Recommendations

- o DHR, working in conjunction with DOH, should conduct a pilot project designed to broaden awareness of tenant rights and responsibilities. This should be done in conjunction with the Housing Court, Connecticut Legal Services and social services agencies.
- o Efforts to strengthen the State's Housing Courts should be supported.

HOUSING

The Task Force firmly believes that the availability of affordable housing for the poor is critical to any serious effort to deal with homelessness. To that end, the Task Force commends Governor O'Neill for his committment to spend $70 million over the next three years in capital funds to build low-income housing and to appropriate $3 million for the establishment of a diminishing rent subsidy program for the working poor.

The Task Force is also heartened by legislative action establishing a two-year pilot rent subsidy program and the establishment of a program within DOH specifically designed for the rehabilitation and construction of transitional living facilities for the homeless.

The creation, preservation and rehabilitation of low-income housing must continue to be a priority issue on Connecticut's agenda. The recommendations contained within this section are merely stop-gap measures, not intended as long-term strategies to address the problems of affordable housing for low-income residents. The Task Force urges that the issue of low-income housing be addressed directly through the Department of Housing's Three Year Plan and within the Governor's Development Cabinet as part of its efforts to identify Connecticut's housing needs for the year 2000. Connecticut's ability to develop long-term strategies through DOH, the Governor's Development Cabinet, and the private sector will ultimately test our ability to deal with the issue of homelessness.

A. Surplus State Property

The process involved in disposing of state-owned real estate or unused and under-utilized property is complex, confusing and time-consuming. A multitude of agencies are involved, but the primary actors are the Department of Administrative Services (DAS), the Office of Policy and Management (OPM), the State Properties Review Board and the relevant committees of cognizance in the General

Assembly. DAS has control over and responsibility for most state property, although there are instances where property is under the jurisdiction of individual line agencies (particularly the Department of Transportation). Some inventories of available state property have been assembled, but their completeness and timeliness are open to question. State agencies may only seek surplus property for their own use and are not permitted to act as an agent on behalf of other potentially interested parties. Surplus property that is not claimed by any state agency may be offered to the municipality in which it is located. Disposing of state property at less than fair market value presents another complication and is practically unfeasible in the absence of major reforms to the State's property management system.

Recommendations

- OPM and DAS should conduct an intensive study of the State's property management system with the goal of introducing a reform package to the 1987 General Assembly. DOH, DHR and the Coalition should be consulted to ensure that the needs of the homeless are considered.
- Legislation should be introduced in the 1986 General Assembly that would permit DOH to make surplus properties obtained from other agencies available to municipalities or non-profit organizations for shelters and transitional living facilities.
- DOH, DHR, and OPM should immediately establish an on-going working group with DAS to develop a coordinated plan for working within the existing property management system. The Coalition should also participate.
- DOH should establish a pilot program in two communities wherein a non-profit group would buy or lease property at a minimal fee in order to develop housing for the homeless. DOH would provide assistance through its existing programs to rehabilitate the property.

B. Private Sector Involvement

Within a wide variety of its programs, DOH seeks to establish a working partnership with the private sector in the creation of low

and moderate-income housing. In addition to working with individual developers, DOH has successfully worked with umbrella groups and organizations to create transitional living facilities for special needs populations in its Moderate Rental Development program. The Housing Development Corporation Fund program is specifically designed to foster public-private venture similar to the Capitol Housing Corporation in Hartford. These funds can be used to provide assistance to shelters or transitional facilities, as the recent loan of $350,000 to Hartford's South Park Inn demonstrates.

Recommendations

- DOH should encourge the development of public-private ventures similar to the Capitol Housing Corporation and the DOH project currently in planning in Bridgepor
- Using funds available in its Housing Development Corporation Fund, DOH should develop two model projects for the homeless in conjunction with the Coalition for the Homeless and appropriate local organizations such as Chambers of Commerce. Funds would be used to provide an incentive match for private contributions and to support the administrative and financial viability of the project sponsor.
- DOH should prepare a brochure detailing how its programs can be used to serve the homeless and distribute it to municipalities, housing authorities, non-profit groups, shelter providers and other appropriate persons. This effort should be coordinated with CHFA, DHR and the Coalition.

C. Meeting the Needs of Special Populations

Given the overall shortage of affordable housing in Connecticut, it is absolutely essential that the housing needs of special populations be identified and prioritized. The State currently does provide housing for some special population groups through DAS (group homes) and DOH (congregate housing for the elderly). Existing programs within DOH and the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority (CHFA) could be further utilized, with a coordination of effort on the part of

state agencies, the private sector and advocacy groups. Care must be taken, however, to ensure that housing needs are met without further segregating and isolating special population groups from general community life. Finally, the development of special transitional facilities will require a coordinated educational and, perhaps, legislative effort to overcome the misconceptions, fears and prejudices evident in some of our communities.

Recommendations

- o DOH, working in conjunction with DAS, should act as a clearinghouse for state human services agencies in developing a coordinated system for the creation of housing for special population groups. The state agencies should identify available support services and financial resources for their respective population groups.
- o DOH should convene a working group to address the housing needs of the poor and to explore the issue of affordable housing for those receiving public assistance.
- o DOH should expand its Housing Development Corporation Fund program to include support for the establishment and operation of entities like the Corporation for Independent Living.
- o DOH should determine whether its Congregate Housing for the Elderly program could serve as a model for meeting the housing needs of other special groups. An adaptation should be developed and tested on a pilot basis.
- o DOH should designate, within existing staff, a coordinator for special housing needs.

D. Security Deposit Program

Currently DOH administers Connecticut's Security Deposit Revolving Loan Fund pilot program which provides low interest loans to individuals in emergency shelters (or other emergency housing) for use as a security deposit on a rental unit. Due to the exhaustion of funds, a moratorium on processing applications was issued on November 8, 1985. Of the total 240 loans that were processed through the program, approximately 70% of the applicants were on some form of public assistance.

As of December 1985, preliminary data indicates that while 75% of the loan repayments are in arrears, 76% of the applicants continued to reside in their apartments.

The following recommendations were developed as a result of the efforts of a special sub committee.

Recommendations

- o A Security Deposit Program should be continued and expanded to assist the homeless secure rental units.
- o The current Security Deposit Loan Program should be redesigned as a grant-in-aid program.
- o DHR should administer the Security Deposit Program.
- o Eligibility for the program should include only those persons who are receiving emergency shelter services and demonstrate need of such assistance. Applicants should be residents of emergency shelters or recipients of state assistance from DHR or DIH who reside in other emergency housing at the time of application.
- o A proposal for the adoption of a Security Deposit Program should be submitted to the 1986 session of the General Assembly. Funds should be appropriated to DHR in order to carry out the new program. A special committee of the Task Force, should assist DHR to develop the necessary programmatic regulations and provide guidance during program implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

E. SRO Conversions

Although DOH does not maintain data on SRO conversions in Connecticut's municipalities, most research indicates that there has been a great loss of SRO housing stock in recent decades as our cities have undergone urban renewal or undertaken downtown revitalization. The ultimate issue is the willingness of some communities to take active steps to provide for low and moderate-income housing. In many instances, a first such step would

be to repeal restrictive zoning and land use policies that have effectively limited the development of low and moderate income housing. Mandating community responsibilities in this area is simply not feasible, given Connecticut's traditional adherence to local control, home rule and judicial restraint. A somewhat less direct approach must be taken.

Recommendations

- o DOH should develop, maintain and update data on SRO conversions in Connecticut.
- o The oversight committee of the Small Cities Block Grant program should affirm its committment to fund projects in municipalities that have demonstrated a willingness to plan for low and moderate income housing needs.

F. Tenant Selection Procedures

Veterans are the only class of people with a statutory preference for admission in state-funded housing projects. All local housing authorities receive copies of the DOH Housing Manual which includes a section on Recommended Tenant Selection Policy and Occupancy Standards for Moderate Rental Housing. DOH recently submitted regulations on waiting lists that require each housing authority to create, maintain and update a list of those seeking admission to its projects. The regulations, however, do not mandate any of the recommended preferences listed in the Housing Manual under the section entitled "Order of Preference for Admission."

Recommendation

- o DOH should revise its tenant selection policy to specifically include households living in shelters within its category of "families without homes."

G. Abandonment of Multi-Family Dwellings

The Department of Housing currently operates a variety of programs designed to help communities prevent the abandonment of multi-family dwellings. These include the Neighborhood Rehabilitation program,

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the Community Housing Development program, the Housing Development Corporation Loan Fund and the Urban Homesteading program. In addition, Governor O'Neill announced at the annual Statewide Housing Conference on October 7, 1985 that he will ask CHFA to set aside $10 million for the restoration, construction and financing of owner-occupied two and three-family homes.

Recommendation

- o DOH should utilize the flexibility of the capital budget to target more of its resources into programs clearly designed to foster the restoration and construction of multi-family dwellings.

SUPPORT SERVICES

The Governor's Task Force recognizes that meeting the needs of the homeless demands more than the mere provision of shelter during emergency situations. Emergency shelters can and often do provide a wide range of social services that not only meet immediate needs but also help make the homeless less dependent on the shelters. The goal of the Governor's Task Force is to provide those support services within the shelter network that will assist the homeless to assume or resume productive roles within the greater community.

A. Shelter Staff Training

While every state agency has identified training as a key priority in meeting the needs of the homeless, none of their existing training curricula are suitable for use for shelter staff. The sole exception is the Department of Mental Health (DMH), which is currently providing a comprehensive training program to seventeen shelters through seven Community Mental Health Centers. There is consensus that state agency staff could benefit significantly from training in how to better provide services to shelters. In order to reduce confusion regarding appropriate jurisdiction and responsibilities, a better agency response to the shelters' needs should be developed through the education of state agency staff about shelter programs and clarification of available state services.

Recommendations

- o A Training Coordinator for Shelters should be hired under contract to DHR to respond to the training needs of both state agency amd shelter staff.
- o The Training Coordinator should convene and conduct a Governor's Statewide Conference on Training for Shelters to introduce state agency staff to the special problems of shelters and to define the responsibilities of the various state agencies for shelters. The goal of the Conference would be to streamline the delivery of services.
- o The Training Coordinator should work with the Coalition and state agencies to design and deliver training programs for shelter staff and volunteers.

B. Case Management Services

It is the general concensus that case management services are needed at two critical points. Initially, the immediate needs of shelter clients must be met. Then as housing becomes available, homeless people will require supportive services to facilitate the transition to permanent living arrangements. Currently the client/staff ratio is unacceptable and must be reduced to a more appropriate level.

Recommendations

- o DHR, in conjunction with DOH, should develop a Case Management Grant Program for shelters to facilitate the transition of homeless persons into decent housing and a stable living arrangement. Additionally, staff should continue to coordinate supportive social services to the formerly homeless until a reasonable transition to permanent living arrangements is complete.
- o Service coordinators should assess clients at intake; develop a plan to move clients out of homelessness; refer clients to appropriate social service agencies; explore all possible housing options within the community; arrange transportation as needed; address the needs of specialized populations.

- To be eligible for the Case Management Grant Program, shelters should design appropriate job specifications, action plans and reporting mechanisms.

C. Department of Health Services Linkage to Shelters

Based upon a recent survey, it would appear that contact between shelters and the Department of Health Services exists primarily within larger cities. There are no standardized procedures for shelter health services. DHR's Directory of Shelters has been shared with DHS and will be distributed to municipal Directors of Public Health. In turn, a listing of all municipal health directors has been shared with DHR and will be distributed to all shelters. Additionally, arrangements have been made for the chairman of the Coalition to address the municipal health directors on the health needs of shelter staff and guests.

Recommendations

- DHS, in conjunction with DHR, should coordinate the formation of an informal committee comprised of local health directors, shelter providers, social services agencies and others to:
  a) develop a uniform protocol guideline on health services and referrals;
  b) identify the health needs of shelter staff and guests;
  c) establish recommended sanitary and safety guidelines for shelters.
- DHS should work with the Coalition Shelter Coordinator in training shelter staff in health issues.

D. Police Training

As a result of discussions with both the State Police Training Academy and the Municipal Police Training Academy, concrete steps have already been taken to establish a linkage between the Coalition and the police in developing training to meet the needs of the homeless, shelters and law enforcement agencies. A program is being designed to reach both those who establish police policy and those whose duty it is to implement it.

Recommendations

- The President of the Coalition will instruct the State Police recruit training class and in-service training class about the problems of the homeless on a regular basis. Similar arrangements will be made with the Municipal Police Training Academy as well.
- A protocol concerning the special needs of the homeless will be developed and included in the MPTA Manual. This protocol should be required reading for all police recruits.

E. State Institution Discharge Planning

A variety of public and private sector agencies are impacted by General Statutes (Public Act 83-575, AAC Medical Assistance by Towns and Public Act 84-168, AAC Work Fare Quotas and Medical Assistance provided by Towns) and Department of Income Maintenance (DIM) regulations. Discharge planning for clients occurs within the context of other federal and state statutory obligations, such as the patient right to receive or refuse treatment (including discharge planning assistance) and within the scope of involuntary and probate commitments. However, discharge planning options are limited by the extent, adequacy and location of community-based treatment and social support services.

Both the Connecticut General Statutes and the DIM regulations are relatively clear on who should bear temporary responsibility for people discharged from state institutions and the procedures to be followed in notifying the responsible parties. There are, however, certain issues which require further clarification. For example, it is difficult, under certain circumstances to determine a patient's town of origin, and this determination may be contested by the town of origin. Also, vouchers issued by the town of origin for necessities are usually not honored by vendors in other towns. Although towns of origin are required to accept mail-in applications for institutionalized patients, there has been concern expressed as to the viability of this approach.

Recommendations

- Further assessment of procedures for all parties involved in the discharge planning process should focus on clearly defining the responsibilities of each party.
- Education for all parties involved in the discharge planning process should focus on clearly defined responsibilities of each party.

APPENDIX

Implementation Status of Recommendations of the Initial Report of the Governor's Task Force on the Homeless

Introduction

The initial report of the Governor's Task Force on the Homeless identified the need for a two phase approach:

- o respond to immediate need of temporary shelter
- o address root causes of homelessness.

An overall perspective in which to view the two phases is a continuum that includes: preventive measures, emergency responses, supportive services, and permanent housing. Within this continuum, transitional steps are necessary.

Overview

The definition of homeless includes those persons who do not have their own permanent residence (those in shelters, those unseen persons living under bridges, etc. and those living with others out of necessity), those about to be evicted, and persons who are situationally homeless due to circumstances beyond their control such as fires, floods or unemployment. This latter group needs a place to live, but continuing supportive services may not be necessary. On the other hand, a significant percentage of the homeless suffer from some chronic disability, such as mental illness or alcoholism. It is these persons who will most likely require continuing supportive services if they are to maintain themselves in their residence. Homelessness strategies must clearly recognize this distinction.

The shelter network needs to be flexible to meet a variety of needs. Currently, shelter responsibility is primarily a community issue. Communities have made a strong response to the need. However, a community may be defined in a variety of ways. Large cities may have a number of community shelters, whereas a small town may want to join a regional effort to share resources and costs. A regional shelter in place of large city shelters may dislocate the homeless further, by transferring the problem rather than solving it. However, a regional effort in a rural area may be a creative solution to effectively dealing with the problem.

While standard regulations and policies are needed, overly stringent health and fire codes may be detrimental to shelter provision. Transition may require some short term flexibility. Overflow, violence within the shelters, staff ratio and training are among areas to be addressed.

Reinstitutionalization is not an answer. However, the transition process for special populations from specialized facilities, or agency jurisdiction, needs special attention to facilitate acclimation into society and reduce the number who wind up as homeless.

Homelessness is a social problem which can be resolved only through the coordinated efforts of governmental welfare, social, health, and mental health programs, in conjunction with the private sector and the communities. A uniform procedure for dealing with this issue must be developed at both the local and State levels.

Coordination within the shelter network and among state agencies will ensure that homeless persons are transferred as appropriate to specialized facilities for more effective case management and are not lost between the cracks.

Within the network there is a need to address the generic shelter needs, as well as the needs of specialized populations(e.g. runaways, substance abusers, victims of domestic violence).

Implementation Status of Recommendations

The following material gives the progress to date, by agency, on the implementation of the initial Task Force Recommendations. Task Force recommendations were grouped into three categories: Funding for Shelters, Housing,and Supportive Services.

A. Funding for Shelters

1. Funding to emergency shelters for the homeless, for youth, and for victims of household abuse and other specialized populations should be increased in order to stabilize current services for the future and to create additional shelter facilities in areas of need.

DHR

The legislature has approved an increase in General Funds for victims of household abuse:

SFY 85	SFY 86
$369,512	$491,680

and for the first time, $625,000 in General fund money was allocated for emergency shelters for the homeless. Federal cuts in the SSBG have resulted in a reduction of available SSBG funds for emergency shelters from $571,021 to $526,212.

In FFY 84-85 the fuel assistance available to shelters for both the homeless and victims of household abuse was $88,153. Of that amount, $72,353 was allocated to shelters for the homeless. This year, $75,000 is available for both types of shelters.

Both quarterly statistical and financial reports, as well as 6 month narrative progress reports and the original program designs which describe the level of service provision are on file at DHR. DHR also maintains a regularly updated listing of all shelters for the homeless currently in operation through Connecticut. DHR plans to require that each shelter receiving money from DHR submit an annual audit report.

This report will provide information on the shelter's entire operating budget, including all sources of income. In addition, DHR is presently developing monthly reporting forms which will be designed to obtain specific demographic information on shelter users, and the types and amount of support services provided at each DHR funded shelter.

DHR has developed a distribution formula (pending Commissioner approval) for the General Fund money. All 33 shelters currently operating in the state will be eligible to receive a percentage of the General Funds in direct proportion to the number of beds at each shelter as compared to the total number of beds available statewide. This will result in a unit rate (cost per bed per day). Generally, shelters will receive an 8% increase.

DCYS

DCYS has developed expansion plans for a regionalized network of shelter/crisis intervention services for runaways and homeless youth (not on the DCYS caseload) and has submitted a budget expansion item reflecting these plans for SFY 87 ($274,431 for SFY 87, $365,908 annualized). A comprehensive community emergency services program will operate in each of the five regions in the state providing 24 hr./day, 7 days/week services including crisis intervention, referral, temporary/emergency placement. The requested funds will be supplemented by $242,641 in SSBG and $232,928 in General Fund support in SFY 87.

In addition, DCYS has developed expansion plans for a regional network of temporary shelters to support youth requiring temporary shelter. A budget expansion item for $537,155 has been included in the SFY 87 department budget to address the need for more intensive support to adolescents, particularly those with histories of acting-out behavior and multiple placements. The integration of services for DCYS and non-DCYS clients will be a priority in cases where improved efficiency and cost-effectiveness would result.

DIM

DIM is currently assessing the cost of providing emergency shelter on an individual case, the number of persons serviced, and length of stay in the General Assistance program. Per diem shelter rates may be increased effective 7-1-86. The DIM role changes this year however, in that the "block grant" funds were transferred to DHR. DIM's function is limited to reimbursing towns for expenses paid on behalf of a GA case.

2. The Department of Income Maintenance's grant-in-aid funds for emergency shelters should be transferred from the Department of Income Maintenance to the Department of Human Resources in order to effectively coordinate and create additional funding.

Recommendation completed. $350,000 was transferred.

3. Battered women's shelters should be made eligible for Department of Income Maintenance reimbursement.

DIM initially decided not to include battered women in the recently developed regulations on the grounds that : (1) the issue would not be

solved through AFDC emergency housing; (2) to try to do so would significantly increase the costs of the program and would require legislative authority; (3) the question as to whether such assistance is income maintenance or service assistance raised a question on the appropriateness of DIH's involvement.

The issue was further reviewed. See the recommendation under the Shelter component, section F, Federal Reimbursement.

4. Towns should be encouraged to use available Community Development Block Grant funds to meet the individual needs of the community's homeless.

The Federal government does not establish priorities for the use of these funds; it is left to the discretion of the entitlement cities. Data available from the Federal government shows that 11 cities expended approximately $524,500 during the past federal fiscal year to assist the homeless. Assistance included shelters (some special purpose), meal programs and social services. Reports showing breakdown by city are available.

5. It should be recommended to the Small Cities Block Grant Policy Advisory Committee of the Department of Housing that a set aside be established for emergency shelters for the homeless under the Small Cities Block Grant.

The priority for FY 85-86 will be projects which create or rehabilitate housing, especially housing for the homeless. Applications which further priority objectives will be given more weight in rating and ranking.

B. Housing

1. Until such time that the federal government renews its financial support of low income housing, the state should look at new and innovative ways to develop low income and subidized housing.

DOH

As a result of recently passed legislation, DOH is developing a two-year pilot rent subsidy program for low-income families living in privately owned rental housing. A total of $250,000 is available for subsidy certificates or it may be linked to rental unit rehabilitation with government funds.

Existing programs are utilized to provide housing to low-income persons (e.g. condominium development for households with incomes under $20,000, elderly housing and low-cost housing utilizing the concept of sweat equity).

SDA

SDA developed a budget option that would enable the agency to develop and operate a network of volunteers to provide information on housing problems of the elderly and to enable the SDA to continue to develop and pilot cost-effective, innovative options in elderly housing.

DCYS

One example of private involvement in sheltercare is DCYS's work with the Windham Heights Housing Project (Anthony Associates) in which the owner donated an apartment unit for use as a shelter and crisis intervention center. Staffing comes from the unit's residents with back-up support and crisis intervention services provided through the Region III Shelter Program funded by DCYS. Besides providing an important shelter resource at no cost, the program helps to reduce vandalism and other problems detrimental to the population living in Windham Heights by preventing and alleviating inappropriate behaviors on the part of children and youth who reside in the housing units.

Also, the Town of Brookfield has recently donated a house for a similar program supported by the Regional Shelter Program in Region V, proving that small towns and municipalities can also provide resources other than financial.

2. Supported residential opportunities for special population groups (e.g. the mentally retarded, the mentally ill, the elderly, the alcoholic, the handicapped) should be created.

DOH

Public Act No. 85-485 authorizes bonds of the state for a Demonstration program for the development of innovative housing to meet the needs of certain homeless persons. DOH received $500,000 to develop rooming houses and multi-family dwellings for households needing transitional housing and support services.

Existing programs, in addition to Small Cities, were utilized to fund the development of an emergency shelter for the homeless and a group home for the mentally ill.

DOC

DOC has established an additional 15 bed capacity in its transitional halfway house pre-release program for sentenced inmates.

DCYS

DCYS has given renewed attention to the community-based sector as a major focus for service delivery. The primary objective is to maintain children and youth in their own homes and communities whenever possible and in the best interest of the child. Maintaining a stable and healthy environment is critical to the resolution of

individual problems while sustaining the natural and community support vital to healthy growth and development. DCYS views that a preventative approach to the Homeless problem is to ensure that children and youth, especially adolescents, receive the services and support necessary for a positive advancement into adulthood. DCYS's SFY 87 budget options include a community expansion package which will begin the process of maintaining children and youth, even difficult cases, in their own homes and communities. To the degree that services can be applied within the natural family structure, problems associated with re-entry can be significantly reduced. Community-based re-entry, reunification and aftercare programs are also included in the DCYS SFY 87 expansion package for those cases requiring such services.

DIM

Disabled adults are currently assisted with shelter payment under the State Supplement Program (Aid to the Disabled) which meets rent as paid unless the cost is exorbitant. This funding source continues to be available to underwrite facilities for various special populations.

3. The results of the pilot security deposit program within the Department of Housing should be monitored and expanded, if appropriate, so that people utilizing shelters and/or emergency housing can be afforded the opportunity of obtaining permanent housing.

See the narrative and recommendations under the Action Plan: Housing D, Security Deposit Program.

DIM

All financial assistance programs funded by DIM provide moving assistance for recipients. At present, rent is paid only on a current basis. Expansion of this function would require legislative action. Payment for utility use is made on a current level year-round for all recipients, and limited back utilities are addressed seasonally under CEAP. In addition, for recipients of State Supplement Programs, all utility costs are met either through the monthly award or through special payments.

C. Support Services

1. Because homeless people have multiple service needs, additional coordinated support services to shelters in areas such as housing, job training, alcohol and drug abuse services, mental health services, parent training, protective services to youth, and financial management, should be made available and accessible. Groups should be established within communities to maximize resources and consultation provided by state and private agencies to shelter staff on how to work effectively with special populations.

DMH

DMH developed a program for providing mental health consultation services to individuals in emergency shelters, piloted in Hartford (April-June 1985).

DMH submitted a Community Support Program Supplemental Grant Application to the Federal Government for an Emergency Shelter Consultation and Screening Program in the amount of $119,098 to continue the pilot program and to expand the program to other regions. Official notification has not been received. However the state of Massachussetts did receive approval implying that Connecticut will not be approved.

DMH has set aside $213,484 of ADAMH Block Grant funds to address the mental health needs of homeless citizens in temporary shelters. An RFP was developed and distributed for the use of these funds in initiatives that include cooperative efforts and to assist in providing direct services to the homeless and training to shelter staff. Applications were reviewed and grants will be awarded during January 1986, retroactive to December 1, 1986 to facilitate to allow service delivery as soon as possible.

DCYS

DCYS has taken preliminary steps toward clarifying and addressing the problem of children and youth arriving at adult shelters seeking assistance. In discussions between DCYS and the Association of Shelters for the Homeless, the problem has been outlined and strategies identified for addressing it. DCYS will provide assistance toward insuring that youth and adult shelters jointly develop procedures and practice allowing for the transfer of children and youth, when appropriate, from adult shelter facilities.

DCYS has helped to construct a regional shelter network for children and youth in order to maintain children and youth as close to their own homes and communities as possible. Such coordination occurs through the use of regional planners and regional advisory councils.

DHR

DHR has for the past two years provided funding for multiple service needs. Services have been limited by the amount of money available to each shelter but should increase with the addition of the General Fund money to the shelters' operating budgets.

DHR has a SSBG Training fund which is available to pay for staff training requested by DHR-funded shelter operators. Appropriate training can be designed and provided by DHR staff or can be paid for by DHR when the shelter operator identifies a trainer who offers the desired training. Workshops in crisis intervention, supervising shelter clients and recognizing and dealing with the chronically mentally ill have been arranged and successfully implemented for the three shelters in Middletown.

At the present time, DHR projects that there will be approximately $0-45 thousand dollars available for new training proposals in the coming year. The money will be offered on a competitive basis (by RFP) in January of 1986.

DIM

DIM works extensively with its clients in referring them to other programs. Information and referral are the key services provided; however, in some cases, direct application for benefits is made on behalf of recipients.

2. Additional funding should be made available to the Department of Mental Health to expand the capacity of residential services for persons who are chronically mentally ill and are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

DMH

SFY 86 funding ($654,287) will provide DMH grants to create 266 additional community residential opportunities. This amount will be annualized in SFY 87 to $2,617,150. This action will expand the capacity of DMH supported community residences by 50%.

3. Funding should be made available to the Department of Mental Health for the establishment of a team of Outreach Advocate Workers in each Mental Health Region who will be available to emergency shelters for screening, referral and client service coordination.

See Support Services, recommendation #1, of this report.

4. Because of the vulnerability of the frail elderly homeless, the Ombudsman Office of the State Department on Aging should have sufficient staff to ensure that all referrals for abuse, neglect, exploitation and abandonment be investigated within 72 hours.

SDA has submitted a budget option for SFY 87 that includes: an ombudsman to deal with the rising numbers of homeless cases requiring protective services; a senior clerk to receive referrals, type cases and make contacts for the Ombudsman; a Chief of Volunteer Services to recruit and train volunteer patient advocates.

5. Because of the high incidence of physical illness in the population that utilizes shelters, linkages between health screening programs and shelters should be established and training on the needs of special population groups should be available to shelter staff.

See the Action Plan: Support Services C, Department of Health Services Linkage to Shelters.

6. The extension of CADAC's federal Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA) Alcoholism Services Demonstration Project which assists homeless elderly alcoholic abusers in obtaining treatment at community based alcohol abuse treatment programs should be supported.

   Due to the Federal government phase down and planned program termination by Sept. 30, the Governor recommended and the General Assembly appropriated general funds to CADAC's Community Grant Program to continue the project as of Oct. 1. A total of $300,000 was granted for a 9 month period, to be annualized at $400,000.

7. Funding for additional long term care facilities for chronic homeless alcoholics should be provided.

   Cost is determined at $450,000. A new facility is to be opened this year in the western section of the state.

8. Active involvement of the police in working with community homeless should be encouraged by additional in-service training and modification of the Police Training Academy's curriculum.

   DCYS

   A model for police training vis-a-vis the homeless is available in the form of several sessions conducted over the past three years on families-with-service-needs - specifically runaways. Training has been done regionally, using a Metropolitan Police Department as a host, and has also been done through the Meriden Police Training Center. Local departments ended up drafting their own patrol procedures as a result. Problems with the legislation were also identified for future consideration and community support services were identified and distributed to those attending. OPM Justice Planning Division was involved in several of these training sessions.

   DCYS has produced a curriculum for shelter training and has implemented it for all youth shelters and host home programs.

9. Whenever feasible, day and evening sites, which include such services as social services, warming centers, meals, and job banks should be located near places frequented by the homeless and those at risk of being homeless.

   DCYS

   Some youth runaway shelters have outreach components which provide for staff to go out to where the runaway is. Runaway shelters also generally provide transportation (to and from school, therapy services, recreational opportunities, etc.).

   DIH

   DIH provides all of its services at its Thirteen District Offices and Sub-offices. In addition, there are five outpost stations in remote

locations which offer intake and other limited services. General Assistance is administered locally by the 169 Connecticut towns; all of which offer emergency shelter services. Many town welfare administrators are available at all times to respond to the needs of the homeless.

D. Lead Agency Responsibilities

1. The Department of Human Resources should be the lead agency for emergency shelter programs and services to the homeless. A statewide policy to administer grants for shelters should be developed, in consultation with shelter providers, which establishes regulations, policies and procedures. Guidelines should be established with utmost regard to the dignity and well being of the client.

   An interagency meeting was held to address the interagency concerns and coordination. DHR has met with state agencies, the Coalition, and others and has drafted regulations.

2. The Department of Housing should be the lead agency for housing issues as they pertain to the homeless. A statewide housing policy should reflect all of the housing needs of the homeless, including emergency, intermediate and long term housing opportunities.

   DOH has indicated homeless as a priority, developed a series of concept papers and met with state agencies, the Coalition, and others.

E. Future Research

1. Funding should be made available to the Department of Mental Health for an accurate epidemiological survey which could be used to examine the numbers of homeless by category and characteristics in order to determine housing and other service needs such as social services and health.

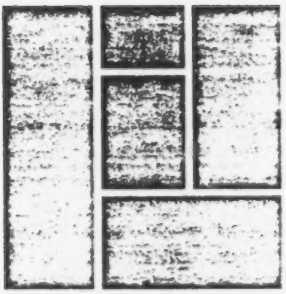
   DMH proposed the following survey at a cost of $21,000:

   - A Needs Assessment to identify current service needs of homeless including a delineation of the numbers, sociodemographic characteristics, service needs, and current service utilization.
   - Descriptive information on men and women.
   - Identification of homeless subgroups.
   - A comparison sample of homeless to determine differences between shelter residents and non-residents.

   See Action Plan: Shelters D, Profile of Shelter Network.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

"EVALUATION OF THE EMERGENCY FOOD AND SHELTER PROGRAM"



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January 1985

By

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1986
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By Richard B. Freeman and Brian Hall
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Exemplary Programs
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10. A STUDY OF THE ISSUES AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE HOMELESS POPULATION IN CALIFORNIA
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(supersedes L0584)

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3. Craig, Warren.
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